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PIONEER

MISSIONARY WORK
OF THE QUORUM OF
THE TWELVE IN THE

**BRITISH
ISLES**

1838-1841

PUBLISHED BY THE SONS OF UTAH PIONEERS

PIONEER



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Last year my wife Kathy and I visited the British Isles, where I had served my mission in Scotland and Northern

Ireland. We traced the genesis of the Church in Great Britain during our travels and visited the area in northern England where some of my wife's ancestors lived when they received the gospel. Hugh Smith and Agnes McDowell Smith were Irish, but they left the "Emerald Isle" because of the potato famines of 1840, 1845, and 1846. Hugh was a journeyman carpenter-joiner who worked in shipbuilding, so he and Agnes settled their young family near the port city of Liverpool in northern England. Through the ministering of Orson Pratt, Edmund Saunders, and Milo Andrews, the Smiths joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1849.

Over the next seventeen years the Smiths moved between Liverpool and Belfast, Northern Ireland, several times, and their family grew to ten living children by 1862. In that year their second son, eighteen-year-old Joseph, emigrated to Salt Lake City, and the rest of the family continued to save and make plans to come later. In the meantime, Hugh established a carpentry shop and began to prosper. His sons were learning their father's valuable trade.

Trouble began when Hugh left the Church and became opposed to leaving Great Britain. Agnes was determined that the family should emigrate and enlisted her eldest son, William John, to help her prepare by secretly putting away money and goods that would be necessary for the

journey. William later wrote, "My father ... discovered our hiding place, had me arrested, placed in jail, and taken before the magistrate." Agnes told her husband he could put the whole family in jail, but when they got out, they would still leave for Zion. William continued, "I was soon set free, and father repented of what he had done and promised to follow in the next ship. This, however, he never did" (Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, 472).

On April 30, 1866, Agnes McDowell Smith kissed her husband as he left for work, packed her belongings, and with nine children at her side she boarded the three-masted ship *John M. Bright*, bound for America (along with B. H. Roberts, who wrote extensively about the journey). Just before the ship set sail, sixteen-year-old Hyrum slipped ashore and returned to his father. Hyrum later wrote that when he returned home that night, he found his father sobbing.

Upon arriving at Castle Garden in New York City, the Smith family found that all the passenger trains were being used to transport soldiers to the Civil War front. The family traveled to Nebraska in a freight train cattle car. At the outfitting post south of Omaha, Agnes and her family joined the 1866 Thomas E. Ricks Company, a mule train, to cross the plains to Utah. She and her brood helped settle Randolph, Utah. She wrote to her husband and begged him to come to Zion, offering to send money for the journey. Hugh wrote back on the unopened envelope, "We will meet on that beautiful shore, but never on this earth."

Hugh Smith and his son Hyrum remained in England for the rest of their lives. Their graves are about fifty yards apart in the West Derby Cemetery in the suburbs of Liverpool. The graves were

located by Kay and Jaci Smith, my wife's uncle and aunt, when they visited there.

During our travel last year, we visited the Benbow farm, John Taylor's homestead, and the Gadfield Elms Chapel, the first Latter-day Saint meetinghouse in all of Europe. You can read more about the significance of that historic chapel in this issue of *Pioneer*. We drove through the Lake District in northwest England and we walked on the Liverpool docks where most of the 55,000 British emigrants to Utah embarked for their voyage to America. But the most memorable event of our pilgrimage was when we visited the cemetery where Hugh and Hyrum Smith are buried. We placed markers to identify the gravesites and we dedicated their sacred resting places.

The British Saints who came to Utah were talented, fearless, hardworking people who sometimes made heart-breaking sacrifices that are still a blessing to us—their children—and will continue to bless generations yet unknown. I know you will enjoy this *Pioneer* issue about the early restored Church in the British Isles. ▣



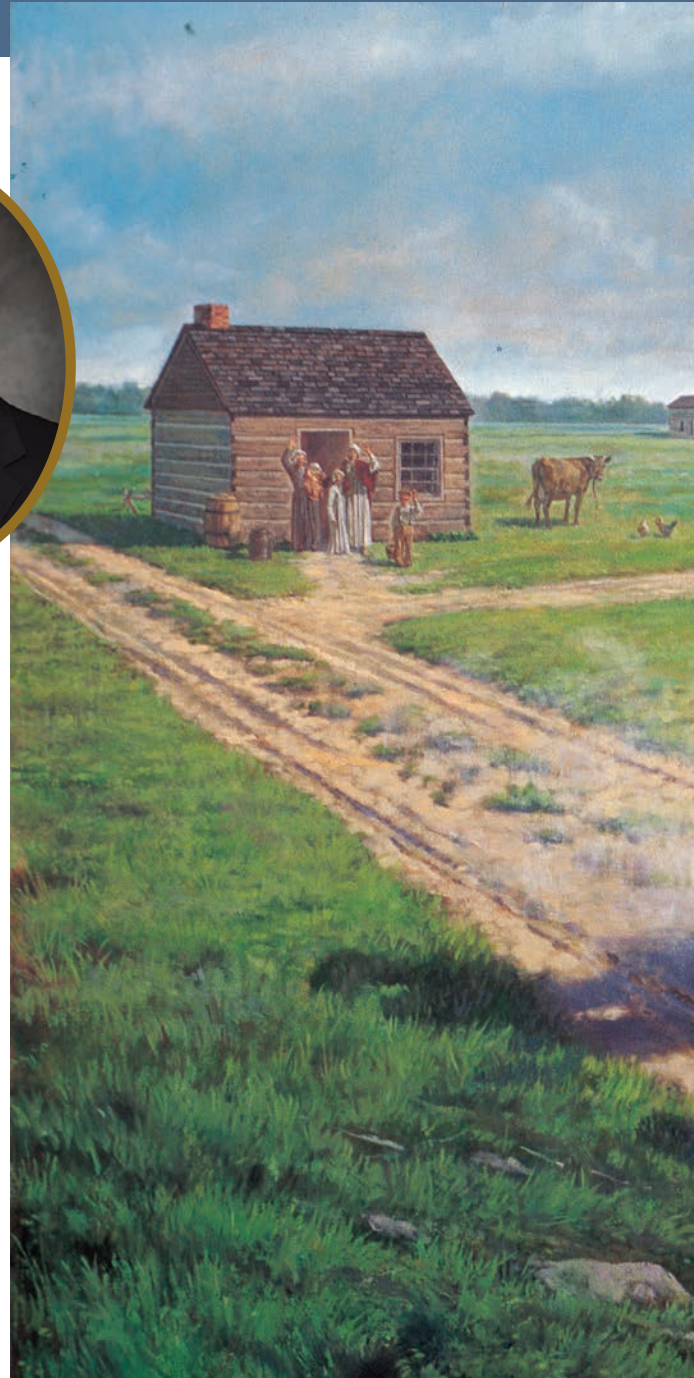
“Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah for Israel!”

THE ENDURING INFLUENCE OF THE MISSION TO THE BRITISH ISLES

BY ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In response to a revelation received by the Prophet Joseph Smith, most of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles embarked on a monumental mission to the British Isles 180 years ago. This call came to a very young Church on the heels of a forced exodus across Missouri and amid strains to establish a new settlement along the banks of the Mississippi River. The entire nation was struggling with economic reversals. Several Church leaders had abandoned their faith and turned on Joseph Smith. Illness was rampant among the Saints as they drained swampy lands infested by mosquitoes and fought to make a habitable place for their families to live. If ever Joseph needed the strength of his trusted associates in the Twelve, it was at the very time he was directed to send them across the Atlantic to preach the gospel.

This historic mission came through great difficulty and personal sacrifice, with many hardships endured by wives and children in the absence of their husbands and fathers. The oft-told account of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, both severely ill, mustering the strength to stand up in their wagon and shout “Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah for Israel!” to their ailing wives does not capture the months of loneliness and worry or the constant demand on women to sustain their children and establish dwellings in Nauvoo. Communications with their missionary husbands were limited to







The enduring influence that this mission to England had upon the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles cannot be overstated.

updates by way of exchanged letters that took weeks to arrive. Leonora Taylor poignantly captured the feeling certainly shared by her peers when she wrote to her husband: “I feel as if I want to get into this letter and go too.”¹

Yet out of these less-than-ideal circumstances came one of the most important chapters of our history. Within eighteen months, most of the apostles had returned to Nauvoo after having baptized more than 6,000 people. Many of these converts followed the brethren who had taught them back to Nauvoo, bringing strength to the Church in many different ways, including the skills and manpower needed to construct the Nauvoo Temple. When questions of succession arose following the death of Joseph Smith, most British converts naturally aligned with the Twelve—their missionaries—and sustained Brigham Young as the Senior Apostle fully authorized to exercise the keys of the kingdom.

Aside from the obvious blessings of numbers and strength to the

Church as a whole, the enduring influence that this mission to England had upon the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles cannot be overstated. These men formed deep bonds of unity during their absence from Church headquarters. Organizing branches, publishing the Book of Mormon and Millennial Star, presiding over conferences, and witnessing the conversion of thousands instilled confidence and prepared them for additional responsibilities upon returning to Nauvoo. Within three years the Twelve found themselves leading the entire Church after Joseph Smith’s death. Three of the group—Brigham Young, John Taylor, and Wilford Woodruff—became Church Presidents and successively led the Saints for the next five decades. Others filled additional missions, and several served in the First Presidency.

Although many converts stayed in the United Kingdom and strengthened the British Mission, thousands set sail for Nauvoo and later for Utah. They brought an infusion of strength that encouraged Church leaders to expand the missionary force into Western Europe, hoping for—and



The Legacy Sculpture

commemorates the migration of a young family from Liverpool to the new world and can be seen outside the Piermaster’s House in the Albert Dock, overlooking the River Mersey. Sculpted by Mark DeGraffenried and donated by the Church in 2001, the bronze sculpture includes a plaque that reads in part: “In commemoration of an estimated 85,000 Latter-day Saints who sailed from Europe to America from 1851–1900. We thank this city for cradling our ancestors.”



in several ways realizing—comparable results there. Not long after the body of the Church relocated to the Rockies, Brigham Young sent several members of the Twelve back to Europe to open missionary work in Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavia.

Despite the nineteenth-century outmigration and gathering of tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints to North America, the British Isles have remained a center of strength in the Church for the nearly two centuries since the baptisms of its first converts. The work moved slowly through much of the first half of the twentieth century due largely to two world wars, but a wonderful period of growth occurred beginning in the 1950s, spurred by President David O. McKay's visits to Scotland, England, and Wales. His tour resulted in the announcement of the London Temple in 1953 and its dedication in 1958. Before long the first stake was created in Great Britain, followed soon by others. The British Mission was divided repeatedly, and Church membership increased. Meetinghouses sprang up rapidly in the 1960s. It was at this time that I was called to labor in the British Mission. With five decades of hindsight gleaned since that life-changing experience, I can better appreciate now what a seminal time in the revitalization of the Church that period proved to be. It was, as our mission theme declared, a “New Era” in Great Britain.

In recent decades, the work has continued to move forward. Some 187,000 Latter-day Saints now reside in the United Kingdom. While serving as the Area President in the 1990s, I was able

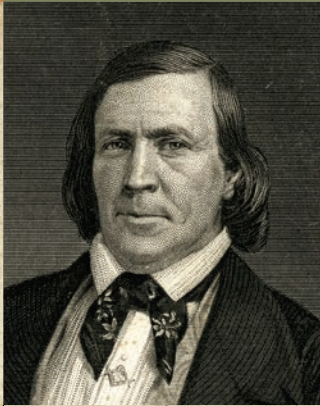
to assist in purchasing the land for a temple in Preston—the second in the UK—and I then had the privilege of participating in its dedication several years later. It is significant that this temple was built in the region where the first missionary labors began in 1837, initiated by Heber C. Kimball and others. Because thousands heard and embraced the gospel, we know that the timing of those missionary endeavors was no coincidence. The Lord prepared a people with the faith to join the Church, obey the word of prophets, leave their native lands, and gather to build Zion in the American West. In the wake of adverse trials that came in the forms of external persecution and internal discord in Ohio and Missouri, the UK emigrants that flooded into Nauvoo and later the Salt Lake Valley infused the Church with renewed spiritual commitment and colonizing fervor.

The spiritual strength of UK pioneers remains conspicuously evident in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales today. Latter-day Saints in these countries carry on the wonderfully rich legacy of resolute faith and devoted perseverance demonstrated by their nineteenth-century forbears, proving that “truth will prevail”² in every generation. ▣

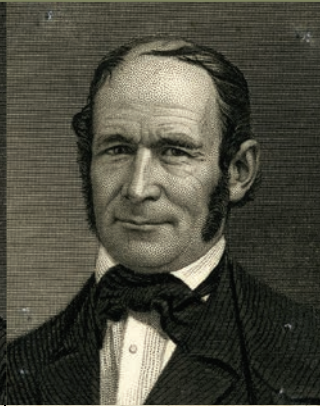
1 James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whitaker, *Men with a Mission, 1837–1841: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles* (1992), 283.

2 This phrase was inscribed on a banner observed by those first missionaries when they arrived in Preston in 1837. It was part of a public commemoration of Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne that same year. The members of the Twelve took it as a favorable omen for their work.

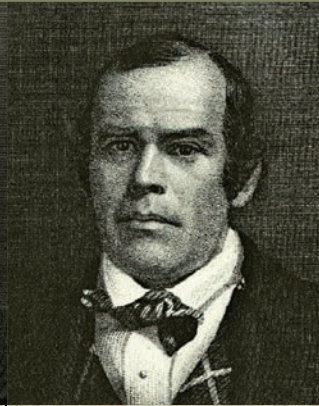
Establishing the Work in the British Isles:



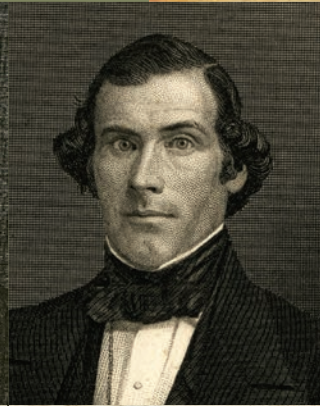
Brigham Young



Heber C. Kimball



Parley P. Pratt



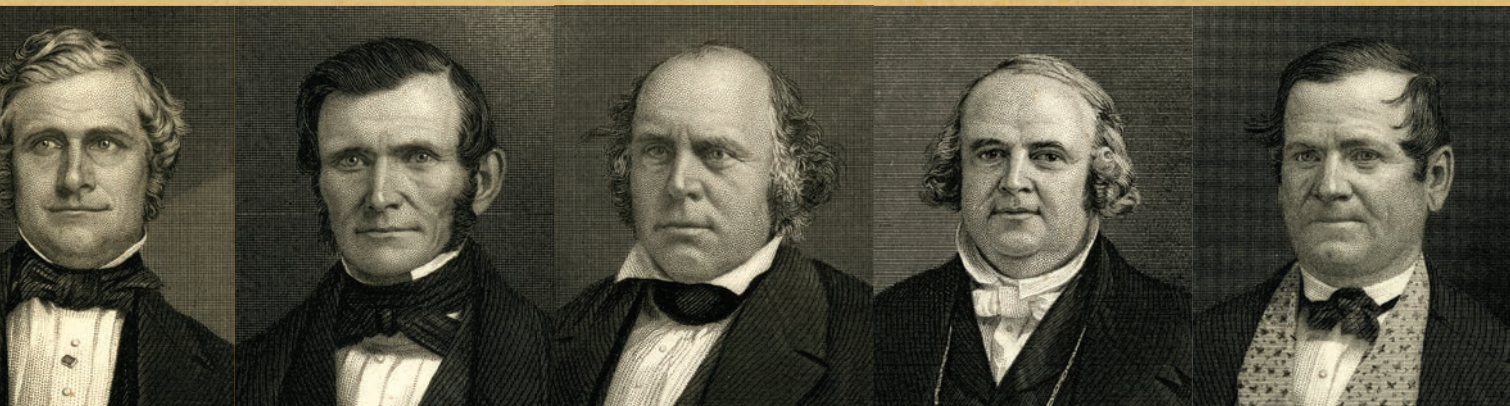
Orson Pratt

The Inspired Mission *of the* Quorum of the Twelve

BY RONALD K. ESPLIN

The proselytizing mission that would forever change the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—and the Church itself—began inauspiciously. In the predawn hours of April 26, 1839, seven members of the Quorum—Brigham Young, Heber Kimball, Orson Pratt, John Taylor, John Page, and newly ordained Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith—and several other members of the Church met secretly at the temple site in Far West, Missouri. They met in obedience to a July 1838 revelation charging them to “take leave of my Saints” from this spot and on this date and “to go over the great waters” on a quorum mission.¹

Apostates and adversaries in Caldwell County were determined to prevent the accomplishment of the July 1838 revelation, thus supposedly proving Joseph Smith to be a false prophet. Some Saints thought it foolish to even consider making the trip to Far



John Taylor

Wilford Woodruff

George A. Smith

Willard Richards

Orson Hyde



Far West

West in the face of threats to kill anyone who tried to fulfill the revelation. Brigham Young and his associates thought otherwise, traveling the nearly 200 miles from Quincy, Illinois, to the spot where their fellow Apostle, Heber Kimball, was in hiding outside Far West. Together, and before sunrise on April 26, they accomplished at Far West what the revelation required. They then turned east, quickly returning to the temporary headquarters of the Church in Quincy.²

Willing sacrifice in the face of challenge became a hallmark of the Quorum of the Twelve under the leadership of Brigham Young. As he and his fellow quorum members were making their way to and from Far West in fulfillment of prophecy, Joseph Smith and others were returning from Missouri imprisonment and making their way to the body of the Saints in Illinois. After a joyous reunion in Quincy, Church leaders prepared to move the Saints fifty miles north to what would become Nauvoo. Following a season of teaching and preparation, quorum members departed in late summer for New York and passage to England.³

Preparation for this mission, however, had its beginnings in early 1835, when the Quorum of the Twelve was first organized. The Twelve were declared to be special witnesses of Christ “in all the world,”⁴ and their first quorum mission—that same year—was to “eastern branches” of the Church. But quorum members understood this to be preparation for much more expansive assignments—and that their work abroad would begin in the English-speaking mother countries of the British Isles.⁵

In June 1837, with Kirtland in turmoil, Joseph Smith whispered to Heber Kimball in the Kirtland Temple that God had revealed “that something new must be done for the salvation of His church”—and that even if Kimball were required to act alone, the work in England must be initiated.⁶ Only days later, Joseph set apart Elders Heber Kimball and Orson Hyde to open the work in England, assisted by other men including Willard Richards and Joseph Fielding.⁷

The eight-month mission of Elders Kimball and Hyde in 1838 laid the foundation upon which the Quorum of the Twelve would build eighteen months later. Their ministry was blessed with success from the moment they spoke to the congregation of Rev. James Fielding in Preston. The better-educated Hyde proved well-suited to Preston

residents, while Kimball’s humble, direct approach brought spectacular success in the villages around. Soon, newly converted local members, including William Clayton, joined the American missionaries in teaching and baptizing nearly 2,000 people. Even after numbers of recent converts left England to join the Saints in the US, almost 1,500 members remained behind in organized branches.⁸ The foundation of the Church in the British Isles had been established.

As Elder Jeffery R. Holland points out in his introductory article for this issue of *Pioneer*, members of the Twelve who departed Illinois in late summer 1839 demonstrated profound commitment and sacrifice. Uncertain of their own health, and leaving their families in the hands of God, they were determined to



The Twelve were declared to be special witnesses of Christ “in all the world.” Their first quorum mission in 1835 was to “eastern branches” of the Church.



Above: In the River Ribble, near Preston, Lancashire, England, apostle Heber C. Kimball baptized the first converts in England on July 30, 1837—only 10 days after the missionaries' arrival.

obey divine directives regardless of personal cost. In this they diverged from two of their fellow quorum members, William Smith and John E. Page, who, unable to muster the necessary faith, elected to remain in the United States and thereby missed a singular opportunity for service and growth. Orson Hyde, the remaining quorum member, would be reunited temporarily with the other eight in Great Britain in April 1841, joining them en route to a separate mission to Palestine.

The arrival of Elders John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff in England in January 1840 marked the effective beginning of the mission. Two months later, in March, Woodruff and William Benbow, a recent convert, introduced the message of the Restoration to the United Brethren in Herefordshire. Within eight months, more than 300 former members of the United Brethren had been baptized members of the Church of Jesus Christ.

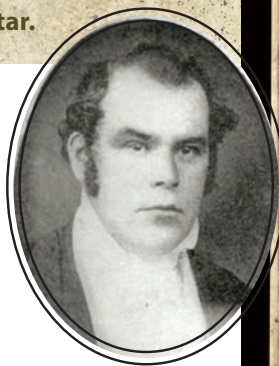
In early April 1840 Brigham Young, Heber Kimball, Parley and Orson Pratt, and George A. Smith arrived in England, and on April 14, the quorum mission was launched by way of a formal *quorum* meeting in Preston—

a meeting that Woodruff designated “The First Council of the Twelve among the Nations.”⁹ At this meeting, Brigham ordained Willard Richards an apostle and set him apart as a member of the Twelve. The eight men present then sustained Young as “standing President of the Twelve.”¹⁰

The following day, these eight members of the Twelve presided over a conference of the British Saints. In addition to strengthening the faith and resolve of those attending, the Twelve received the conference’s approval to publish a periodical and a hymnal, the first step toward what would become an important Church publishing enterprise.¹¹

On April 16, the Council of the Twelve reconvened to determine specific assignments. It was decided that Parley Pratt would edit the now-named *Millennial Star*. Kimball would return to the villages where he had enjoyed success during his earlier mission. Orson Pratt would go to Scotland. Taylor would initially proselytize in Liverpool, then briefly in Ireland, and later on the Isle of Man. Smith would be assigned to the Staffordshire Potteries, and Young and Richards would join Woodruff in overseeing the flourishing work in Herefordshire.¹²

Parley P. Pratt became the first editor of the *Millennial Star*.



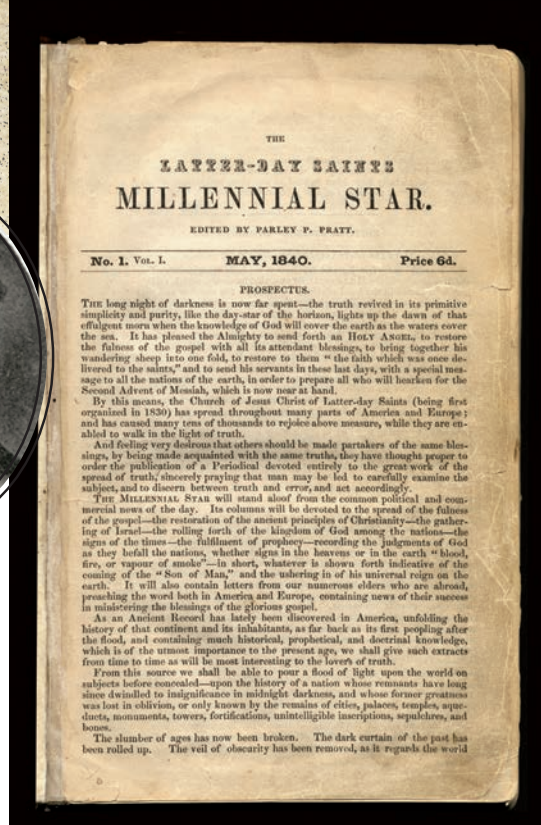
Brigham Young perceived the Twelve of the Kirtland Period as having been divided.¹³ Indeed, Joseph Smith had been contemplating these same concerns in March 1839 when he received the inspired caution recorded in Section 121 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—that the powers of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

Young determined that his own leadership would help unify the quorum. The founding documents of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, including the 1835 revelation on priesthood authority and responsibility, urged unity. So did more recent instructions to the Twelve from the First Presidency before the Twelve left Illinois for the British Isles.

During this important April 14 council meeting, Young emphasized quorum unity once again, as Richards noted in his diary.¹⁴ As previously noted, the eight men often worked in teams. But there were also times when quorum members received individual assignments—as in the cases of Pratt, Smith, and Taylor. When apart from one another, the men kept each other informed, counseled one another, and buoyed each other up through letters. They also shared thoughts of home and family, especially as the New Year of 1841 dawned and the time drew closer for returning home.¹⁵ Throughout their time in Great Britain, the eight members of the Twelve were united in ways they had not been before, and this surely contributed to their impressive success.

Young made concerted efforts to lead by example, treating colleagues respectfully, seeking their counsel, and writing frequent letters to them when they were not nearby. He also tried to be an exemplary missionary, giving his all in working with Richards and Woodruff in Herefordshire. And despite administrative burdens, he traveled as widely as he could, blessing and strengthening new members of



the Church. In October 1840, for example, he and Heber Kimball preached in Hardin, Wales, an experience he reported in a letter to his wife Mary Ann:

We have hered from Wales whare Br Kimball and I went, a grate meny of the people was sorry they did not obey the gospel when we ware there. The report went out that we had the same power that the old apostles had, [and] it is true we did lay hands on one young man that was quite low with a fever; we rebuked his fever and he got well. We laid our hands on a woman that had verry bad eyes, and she emeditly recovered. They have a [great deal] to say about our preaching. They say that Elder Kimball has such sharp eys that he can look wright through them, and Elder Young Preashes so that every Body that heres him must believe, he preaches so plane and powerful.¹⁶

Describing this same short mission, Kimball later wrote that although he and Young only preached two formal sermons in Wales, “the people almost universally received our testimony.” The power of God was manifest, noted Kimball, in several blessings, including that of a young man “lying at the point of death” who was healed and then, only a few days later, was baptized.¹⁷

The experience of George A. Smith, the youngest of the Twelve (he turned twenty-three while in England), illustrates the outsized demands he faced and the personal growth he

experienced from meeting difficult challenges with no one but the Lord to rely on. In January 1841, Elder Smith wrote to his younger brother, John, about the blessings of being assigned to the Staffordshire Potteries, where he directed the work alone. He shared the news that eighty-eight male employees of the Potteries had been baptized members of the Church and had received priesthood offices. He also shared that so many of these brethren came to seek counsel from him that he seldom got to bed before midnight:

[H]ow foolish it makes me feel to Be Looked up to with So much Earnestness by Persons Who have been Professors of Religion and Preachers of the different Sects. I thank the Lord for the Wisdom he has given me and the Success I have had in the teaching thes[e] men [who] all look to me for instruction as Children to A Father and this makes me feel vary Small indeed and Causes me to Cry unto my father Who is in Heaven for Wisdom and Paetence to do my fathers Work¹⁸

In all aspects of their missionary labors, Brigham Young encouraged and supported his brethren of the Twelve. Indeed, Brigham had been divinely prepared to lead the first mission in the British Isles, perhaps especially

by his experiences in leading the 1838–39 exodus of the Saints from Missouri while the Prophet Joseph and others were imprisoned in the Liberty Jail. Once Young and his fellows boarded the England-bound ship in New York in early 1840, they were forced to rely on each other and on the Lord, receiving no additional instructions from Joseph Smith until late 1840.

From their first days in Great Britain, Young and his associates moved forward with confidence, managing pressing tasks and setting all hands to work. But soon enough they encountered situations where they longed for Joseph's advice.

On May 20, 1840, Brigham Young, Willard Richards, and Wilford Woodruff hiked atop the Herefordshire Beacon in the Malvern Hills for prayer and discussion. Though they recognized how urgently the Saints needed publications, especially the Book of Mormon, they had left American shores uncertain whether they had Joseph's authorization to publish the book in England. They wondered, should they proceed without the Prophet's direct

The view taken from Herefordshire Beacon. Elders Wilford Woodruff, Brigham Young, and Willard Richards climbed the hill and united in prayer.

PHOTO BY KENNETH MAYS

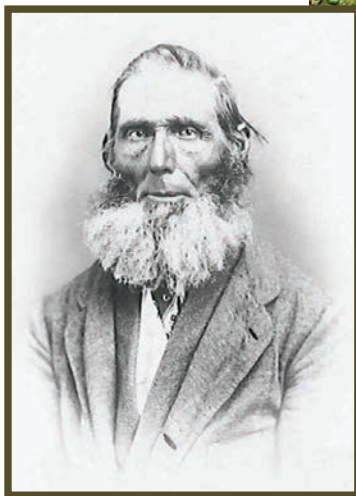


permission? After fervent prayer, Willard Richards recorded the decision of the three men on a slip of paper which all three signed and which Young carried with him back to Herefordshire:¹⁹

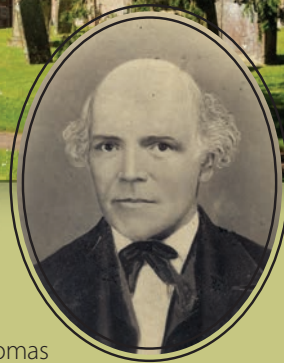
We having obtained the funds to print a Hymn Book & Also the Book of Mormon it is our feelings that Broth[er] Young repair immediately to Manchester & join his Brethren previously appointed with him on a committee for the printing of the Hymn Book & that they cause 3000 copies to be issued without delay & Also that the same be a committee to cause 3000 copies of the Book of Mormon to be printed & completed with as little delay as possible & cause an index to be affixed [affixed] to the same—the form of the Book to be at the disposal of the committee.

On the way to Manchester, Young consulted with George A.

Smith about the plan, and Smith added his endorsement and signature to the document: “I perfickley concur with the feelings of my Broetherin abov named.” In Manchester, Young met with Parley Pratt, John Taylor, and Heber Kimball, all of whom gave their approval and signed the document. Orson Pratt, in more distant Scotland, learned of the plan soon after work began; he ratified the decision of the others.



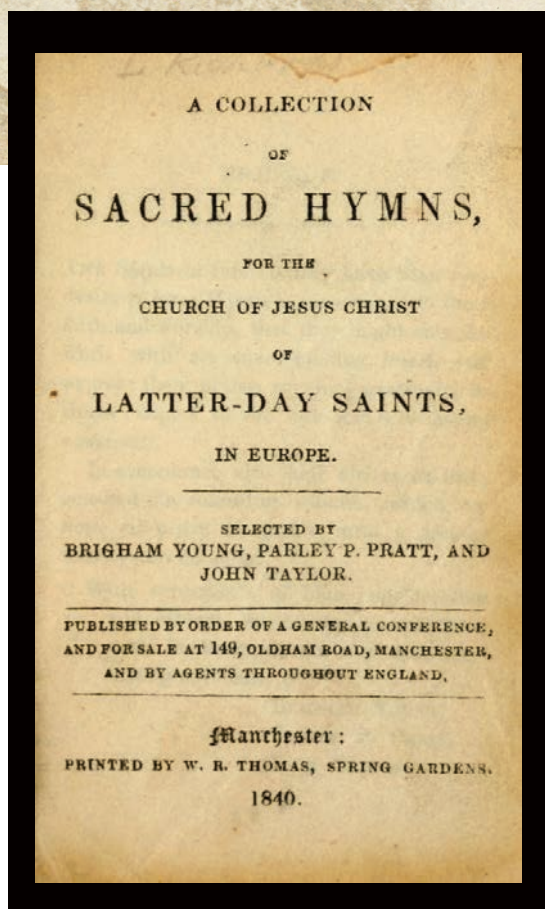
Thomas Kington



William Pitt

Dymock Parish Church.

South of the Herefordshire area of England is the village of Dymock, Gloucestershire. Thomas Kington, once superintendent of the United Brethren, lived there and his conversion to the Church led to the conversion of many others. His generosity financed a number of important projects, including the publishing of the Book of Mormon. The first parish hymnal of the Church of England was developed in the Dymock Parish Church. William Pitt, later the leader of William Pitt's Nauvoo Brass Band, was choirmaster in that church. William Pitt's sister Mary was a recipient of a marvelous priesthood blessing given at the hands of Brigham Young while he was in Dymock during the summer of 1840. Following a remarkable healing, Mary walked through the streets of Dymock proclaiming the truth of the restored gospel.



Funds were obtained to print 3,000 copies of a hymn book and the Book of Mormon.

Young and those with him had also assumed heavy responsibilities for the emigration of the Saints from the British Isles, and more letters were sent to Nauvoo imploring the Prophet Joseph's direction. While Young was not paralyzed by the lack of responses from Joseph, as the weeks and months went by, he worried: he and his associates had proceeded prayerfully, but would Joseph concur with their decisions? In early September 1840, Brigham Young and Willard Richards wrote again to Joseph, reporting their decisions and asking for counsel. They rejoiced "that the Church has a Moses in these last days (and an Aaron by his side) of whom the Saints may enquire, as in days of old, & know the mind of the Lord." They nevertheless shared their determination to shoulder their responsibilities and advance the work as best they could:

*Our motto is go ahead. Go ahead.—& ahead we are determined to go—till we have conquered every foe. So come life or come death we'll go ahead, but tell us if we are going rong & we will right it.*²⁰

The Twelve held the keys for taking the gospel to the world, and Joseph apparently felt it right to let them counsel with the Lord and make their own way. Not until only weeks before the end of their mission did answers come

from Nauvoo. Joseph essentially endorsed what the Twelve had done or intended to do, including their decision to leave the British Isles and return home in spring 1841.²¹

Thus, in late March, each of the Twelve completed obligations in his area of service and traveled to Manchester. There, the eight men who had opened the British Isles to the preaching of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ were joined by a ninth member of the Twelve, Orson Hyde, who was on his way to Palestine with a special assignment from the Prophet Joseph. For nearly a week these nine dedicated men would meet together in private councils and in conferences with the Saints. April 1 was a day of reunion, of sharing experiences and testimonies. On April 2, 3, and 5, the Twelve met in private councils to plan how, in their absence, the work would move forward and prosper. During one of these councils, quorum members endorsed the work of the Publication Committee and agreed unanimously that Parley Pratt, whose family had recently crossed the Atlantic to join him, would stay in Great Britain to preside over the mission and oversee its publications. Under Pratt's direction, Amos Fielding would superintend emigration matters.²²

When the Twelve met with the Saints in conferences on Sunday, April 4, all nine men "bore testamoney to the Bible Book of Mormon J. Smith as a prophet," wrote Elder Woodruff in his diary. "It is seldom that any congregation is privil[e]ged with such testimony."²³ On April 6, 1841, a final conference was convened, and members of the Twelve presented to the assembled Saints decisions that the Twelve had made that week in councils. The Saints were asked to sustain each decision in turn, which they did. Local leaders then reported the number of members in their respective branches—a total of 5,814 members in organized branches and an additional fifty not part of any organized branch. This was nearly four times the number of members in the British Isles when the collective work of the Twelve began there in early 1840.²⁴

Before leaving Manchester on April 15, the nine men finalized for publication in the *Millennial Star* a farewell letter—"An Epistle of the Twelve—directed to Church members throughout the British Isles."²⁵ The departing Apostles thanked the Saints for their diligence in receiving "the counsel of those whom God has seen fit to send among them, and who hold the keys of this ministry"; the Saints were com-

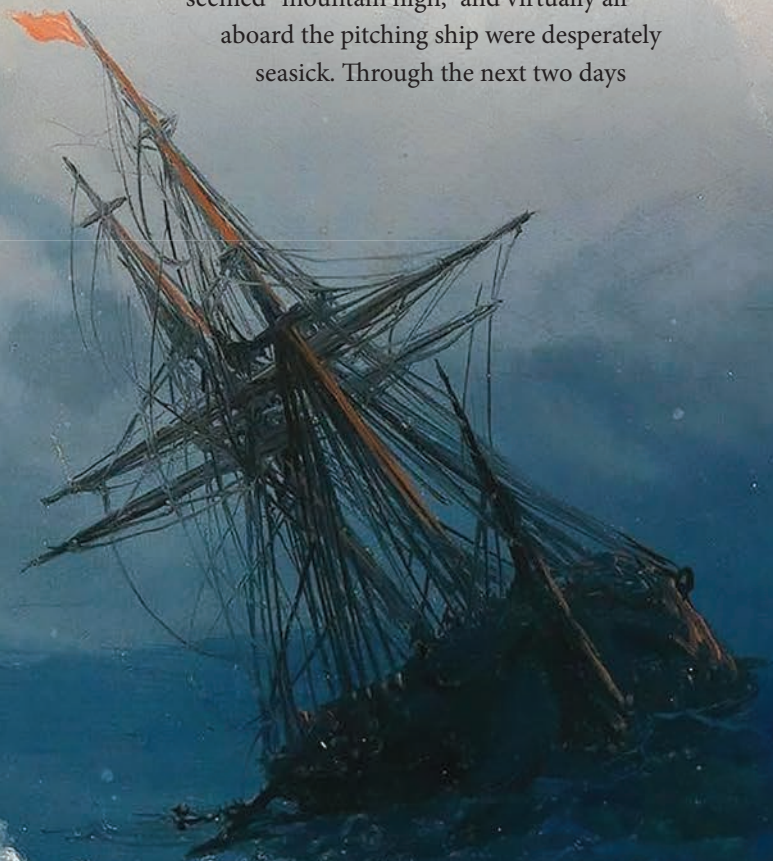
mended for the union and spiritual power resulting from their humble faith. The members of the Twelve concluded the letter with an expression of abiding love for the Saints, a love clearly reciprocated. Though most new members of the Church were poor, a contingent of Saints from Manchester traveled with the departing elders to Liverpool and provided funds to aid them as they returned home.²⁶

Saints throughout the British Isles looked to the nine missionary Apostles as fathers in the gospel. Many of the Saints had been taught personally by one or more of these faithful men, and the Saints' confidence in and love for them ran deep. Relying on Heaven and on one another, the Twelve had been blessed with a unity they had

never before enjoyed and a capacity to fulfill heavier demands than they had previously experienced. As a quorum, they were blessed by God with an enduring spiritual power.

On April 20 seven of the returning Apostles, together with a significant number of emigrant Saints, set sail aboard the *Rochester*, known to be a fast ship. But their journey was fraught, not speedy. At midnight on April 24, the contrary winds which had blown since soon after their departure increased to gale strength and destroyed the fore topsail. By the following morning, the waves seemed "mountain high," and virtually all aboard the pitching ship were desperately seasick. Through the next two days

*all aboard the
pitching ship were
desperately seasick*



and nights, the fierce wind continued and seasickness increased until some among the passengers feared their children would die. Then, during the morning of April 28, the storm worsened. Berths crashed down and some of the baggage broke loose, threatening to crush the passengers. At this point, members of the Twelve called upon Heaven to still the seas. The next day Woodruff noted simply, “The Sun Shines plesent & we have a fair wind for the first time since we left Liverpool.”²⁷ The following week, Brigham Young recorded this same event in his diary, noting that

*when the winds ware contr[ar]ly the 12 a greed to humble them selves before the Lord and ask him to calm the seas & give us a fair wind, we did so & the wind emeditly changed and from that time to this it has blone in our favor.*²⁸

The British Mission of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles had a lasting impact on the quorum itself, on the life of the Church in the British Isles, and on the strength and richness of the broader Church. Impressive numbers of convert baptisms tell only part of the story. Perhaps the more significant story is that the Twelve established a vital, adaptive organization of dozens of congregations and hundreds of humble and prayerful leaders. They taught the crucial significance of regular conferences. And they created an

effective system of emigration that would be used for decades. Before emigrant Saints departed from Liverpool or other ports, they were organized into companies, each having priesthood leadership. Company members were expected to be loyal and supportive of one another, and many became fast friends. The firsthand experiences of the Twelve in overseeing emigration enabled them, in the years following their return to the US, to develop programs and funding that would enable hundreds and then thousands of European Saints to journey to Zion. In addition, the Twelve established a printing enterprise that blessed the Saints in the British Isles with Books of Mormon, hymnals, and other vital publications, including a periodical—*The Millennial Star*—that gave generations of Church members access to teachings of latter-day prophets, inspiring



words from local members and leaders, and meaningful Church-centered news.

During their time in the British Isles, the Twelve had been molded into a spiritually mature and well-prepared priesthood quorum. So great was the need for their proven leadership that, once most had returned to Nauvoo, the Prophet was unwilling to wait until October general conference to put them to work. Thus, on August 16, 1841, he convened a “special conference of the Church” to make a constitutional change in its leadership. The result, as Willard Richards noted tersely in his diary, was “Business of the Church given to the 12.”²⁹ While the 1835 and 1836 revelations on the priesthood make it clear that this was always

the Lord’s plan, only after the quorum had proven itself to be united and spiritually prepared could it be implemented.³⁰

Not by chance would those nine members of the Twelve who sacrificed and served together in the British Isles remain loyal to the Prophet Joseph for the remainder of his life. Not by chance would they receive additional keys and the “fulness of the Priesthood” at Joseph’s hand. And certainly not by chance would they bear the burdens of the Church following Joseph’s death. These nine faithful quorum members provided divinely inspired, crucial, and singularly effective leadership to the Saints for more than half a century, and three of them would serve as the Lord’s chosen prophet. ▣

1 Doctrine and Covenants 118: 5–6; see *Joseph Smith Papers, Journals 1*: 284–5 for the original text of the revelation. See also Minutes, 26 Apr 1839, General Minutes Collection, Church History Library (CHL); and Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 26 Apr 1839, CHL. With the ordinations of Woodruff and Smith, there were ten apostles in the Quorum. In addition to the seven at Far West on this date, Orson Hyde was temporarily disaffected, Parley Pratt was in prison, and William Smith was with family in Illinois. Willard Richards, already serving in England, was yet to be ordained. There would not be a full quorum until Lyman Wight was ordained in 1841.

2 Ronald K. Esplin, “The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership,” *BYU Studies* (2006): 144–5.

3 Esplin 149–55.

4 Doctrine and Covenants 107:23.

5 See Ronald K. Esplin and Sharon E. Nielsen, “The Record of the Twelve, 1835: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles’ Call and 1835 Mission,” *BYU Studies* 51.1 (2012): 4–52.

6 See James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission, 1837–1841—The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles* (1992), 23. Kimball, perhaps the least educated of the Twelve, resisted going to England alone—and was undoubtedly relieved when Hyde was assigned as his companion. That the work

in England opened without him at the helm infuriated quorum president Thomas Marsh, who complained to Joseph Smith, resulting in the 24 Jul 1837 revelation now known as Doctrine and Covenants 112.

7 Esplin 105.

8 “A Great Work Done in That Land”: The Mission of Elders Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde to England, 1837,” *Ensign* 17 (July 1987): 20–7.

9 Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 14 Apr 1840.

10 Minutes, 14 Apr 1840, Brigham Young Papers, CHL.

11 Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 15 Apr 1840.

12 Minutes, 16 Apr 1840, Brigham Young Papers, CHL; Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 16 Apr 1840.

13 Historian’s Office Journal, 16 Feb 1859, CHL.

14 Doctrine and Covenants 107:27. The day he was ordained, Willard Richards wrote in his diary a plea to God that he might act in righteousness “with My Brethren the Twelve, that we may ever be of one heart & one mind in all things.”

15 For a sampling of extant letters, see Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, Appendix B, documents 7, 10–11, 13, 16, 18, 24.

16 Brigham Young to Mary Ann Young, 12 Nov 1841, Blair Collection, University of Utah.

17 Heber C. Kimball to readers, 4 Aug 1841, *Times & Seasons* 2 (16 Aug 1841): 508.

18 George A. Smith to John L. Smith, 8 Jan 1841, in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker 420.

19 Certificate, 20 May 1854, Miscellaneous Papers, Brigham Young Papers, CHL.

20 Brigham Young and Willard Richards to Joseph Smith, 5 Sep 1841, *Joseph Smith Papers*, online.

21 See, especially, Joseph Smith to the Twelve, 15 Dec 1840 *Joseph Smith Papers*, online.

22 Esplin 180–1.

23 Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 4 Apr 1841, CHL.

24 Minutes, 6 Apr 1841, *Millennial Star* 1 (Apr 1841): 304; Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 6 Apr 1841, CHL.

25 *Millennial Star* 1 (Apr 1841): 309–12.

26 Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 19 Apr 1841, CHL; Esplin 181–2.

27 Diary of Wilford Woodruff, 29 April 1841; also, 23 April–5 May 1841; see also, Esplin, *Emergence of Brigham Young*, pp. 182–183.

28 Diary of Brigham Young, 5 May 1841, Church History Library.

29 Diary of Willard Richards, 16 Aug 1841, CHL; Minutes, 16 Aug 1841, CHL, and also in *Joseph Smith Papers*, online; Esplin 190–1.

30 Doctrine and Covenants 107: 22–24; Diary of Joseph Smith, 16 Jan 1836, in *Joseph Smith Papers: Journals I*, 158.

Missionary Labor in Great Britain 1838–1841



BRIGHAM YOUNG

1840–41: **England**
(Herefordshire, Manchester,
Lancashire, Liverpool,
London, Staffordshire) and
briefly in **Wales**



HEBER C. KIMBALL

1838: **England** (Lancashire)
1840–41: **England**
(Lancashire, Herefordshire,
Manchester, London) and
briefly in **Wales**



ORSON HYDE

1838: **England** (Lancashire)
1840–41: Briefly in
England, then Germany,
Palestine (The Holy Land)



PARLEY P. PRATT

1840–41: **England**
(Manchester)



ORSON PRATT

1840–41: **Scotland**



JOHN TAYLOR

1840–41: **England**
(Lancashire, Manchester,
Staffordshire, Isle of Man)
and briefly in
Northern Ireland



WILFORD WOODRUFF

1840–41: **England**
(Herefordshire, Staffordshire,
Worcestershire,
Gloucestershire, Lancashire,
Manchester, London)



GEORGE A. SMITH:

1840–41: **England** (Staffordshire, Herefordshire, London)



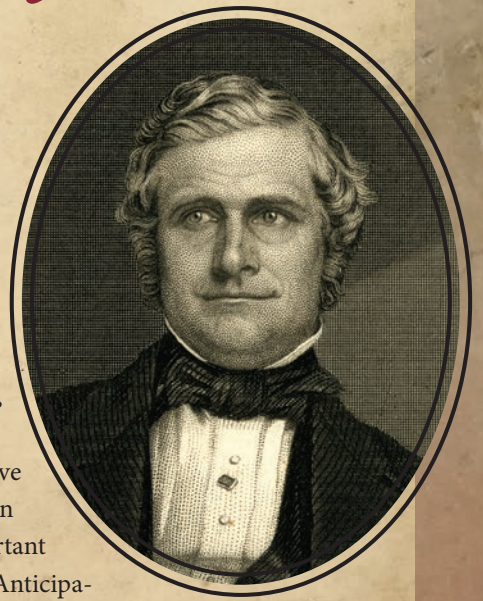
WILLARD RICHARDS

1838: **England** (Lancashire,
not yet ordained to the Twelve)
1840–41: **England**
(Herefordshire, Lancashire,
Manchester, Gloucestershire,
Liverpool)

THE WORD OF THE LORD LIKE *Fire in My Bones*

**SUSAN EASTON
BLACK**

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In the late fall of 1839, Joseph Smith called members of the Twelve and other worthy men on a singularly important mission to the British Isles. Anticipation was running high, and Elder John Taylor wrote for virtually all these missionaries when he penned the following words: “The thought of going forth at the command of the God of Israel to revisit my native land, to unfold the principles of eternal truth and make known the things that God had revealed for the salvation of the world, overcame every other feeling.”¹

Taylor’s passion for religion was marked by his 1824 conversion to Methodism as a sixteen-year-old. In 1832 he had left his native England for Toronto, Canada, in part because of a personal revelation that he would one day preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in North America. By early 1836 John and his wife Lenora had learned of the Restoration and had begun attending lectures by Elder Parley P. Pratt. Taylor later wrote, “When I first encountered upon Mormonism, I did it with my eyes open, I counted the cost; I looked upon it as a life-long job and



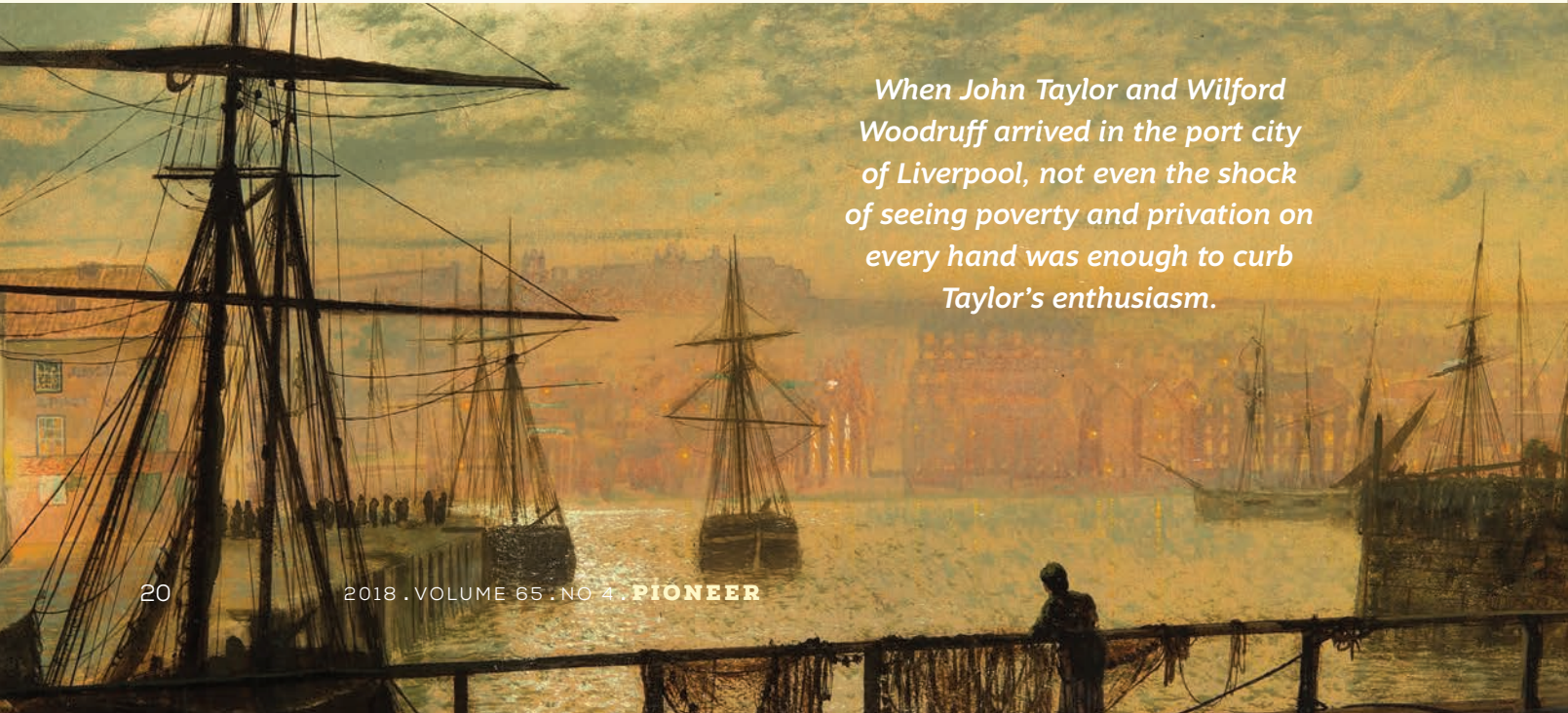
I considered that I was not only enlisted for time, but for eternity.”² John and Lenora became convinced of the truth of the Restoration and of Joseph Smith’s prophetic role; they were baptized in May 1836.

In the early spring of 1837 Taylor traveled to apostasy-ridden Kirtland to meet the Prophet Joseph. There, as Richard Jensen recounts, Taylor discovered that his and Lenora’s own missionary, Elder Pratt, was among those whose faith had been shaken. Taylor squarely faced Parley and declared, “If the word was true six months ago, it is true today; if Joseph Smith was then a prophet, he is now a prophet.” (Taylor recorded that Pratt “soon made all right with the Prophet Joseph.”) Days later, and as one who had been a member of the restored Church for less than a year, Taylor attended a Sunday meeting in the Kirtland Temple, a meeting convened in the Prophet Joseph’s absence. He listened quietly as some present spoke negatively of Joseph’s character, and then, rising to his feet, asked permission to address the body. He firmly declared, “If the spirit which he [the Prophet Joseph] manifests does not bring blessings, I am very much afraid that the one manifested by those who have spoken, will not be very likely to secure them.”³

Taylor’s faith remained certain and unwavering throughout his life. Certainly, his anticipation of receiving divine assistance as a missionary to the British Isles was not the least dissipated when, unwell and in crowded quarters, he sailed on the packet steamer *Oxford* out of

the New York Harbor on December 20, 1839, with sixty-three other passengers in steerage, including his deathly ill companion, Elder Wilford Woodruff. And five weeks later when Taylor and Woodruff arrived in the port city of Liverpool, not even the shock of seeing poverty, privation, and economic reversals on every hand was enough to curb Taylor’s enthusiasm. In the January 30 letter he dashed off to his wife Lenora to announce his safe arrival in England, Taylor could have lamented his deplorable lodgings in the Birmingham Arms on Church Street. Instead, he joyously wrote that Lenora’s brother, George Cannon, and sister-in-law, Ann Quayle, had accepted the news of the Restoration and would be baptized. Taylor declared, “I feel the word of the Lord like fire in my bones.”⁴

By February 2, just three days after arriving in Liverpool, Elder Taylor had rented a hall on Preston Street and delivered the first public Latter-day Saint sermon in town. Taking his text from Jude 1:3, “It was needful for me to . . . exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith,” he spoke of the truths of the Restoration to a near-capacity crowd.⁵ Even though few expressed interest in his message, Taylor was not discouraged. When men of the cloth rebuffed the truth, he wrote to Joseph Smith, “They were too holy to be righteous, too good to be pure, and had too much religion to enter into the kingdom of heaven.”⁶ Was Taylor’s confidence in the word lessened by rebuffs or disinterest? Not in the least. Instead, Taylor busied himself with selecting hymns for a hymnal and proofreading pages for



When John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff arrived in the port city of Liverpool, not even the shock of seeing poverty and privation on every hand was enough to curb Taylor’s enthusiasm.

a new edition of the Book of Mormon as if all of England would embrace the gospel message.

Why would Taylor exhibit such confidence when few were accepting his words? John Taylor knew the truthfulness of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Unlike some of his missionary colleagues, Taylor never saw large numbers of his hearers join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But he certainly saw the beginnings of a harvest. By April 1840 he was meeting regularly with a Liverpool branch of twenty-eight members.

A surprising number of the branch members in Liverpool claimed Ireland as their native land: about one in seven were Irish-born and -reared. Elder Reuben Hedlock—one of Taylor's fellow missionaries—was so taken with the tales told by these Irish Saints that, on May 22, 1840, he boarded a steamer headed for Belfast, remaining there for three days before returning to Liverpool and writing this of the Emerald City:

*It is a fine flourishing town, containing about 54,000 inhabitants. Here I met (as I passed through the streets) the rich enjoying their abundance and the poor in rags begging for a morsel of food to sustain life. I had never before witnessed such scenes of suffering, and I say in my heart, has the Gospel of Jesus Christ lost its power among those who profess it, so that one part of the human family must drag out a miserable existence, and die in wretchedness and want while the other can live in pride and plenty all their days?*⁷

Despite Hedlock's keen interest, it was John Taylor, and not Hedlock himself, who first preached the gospel in Ireland. Taylor's ten-day Irish mission had its genesis with James McGuffie, one of the Irish members of the Liverpool branch. Taylor had been invited to the home of McGuffie and there had met Thomas Tait, an Irish farmer in Liverpool on business. Before leaving the McGuffie home, Taylor prophesied that Tait would be the first man baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ in Ireland. At about this same time, William Black of Lisburn, Ireland, was ordained a priest at the Church conference held in Manchester on July 6, 1840; the following day, Black was called to be a missionary to Ireland.

LEFT: ART BY JOHN ATKINSON GRIMSHAW;
RIGHT: ART BY KEN BAXTER



On July 27, 1840 John Taylor accompanied his friend James McGuffie and the newly ordained William Black aboard a cross-channel steamer. On July 28 the steamer docked at Warrenpoint, a beautiful Irish village located at the head of the Carlingford Lough in County Down. The missionaries disembarked and walked seven miles to Newry, a market town. There McGuffie, a native of Newry, arranged for Elder Taylor to speak at the Session House, the formal name of the town courthouse. McGuffie hired a bell-man—or town crier—to go through the town ringing his bell and giving verbal notice of the meeting.

In anticipation of hearing John Taylor speak, upwards of seven hundred Newry residents gathered at the courthouse that evening. This was the first time a sermon on the Restoration had been preached in Ireland. At the conclusion of his sermon, when Taylor invited interested persons to be baptized, no one accepted his invitation. At a second meeting held at the same venue the following evening, only a few people gathered. Given the poor attendance and the apparent lack of interest in the Restoration, Taylor turned the meeting into a question-and-answer discussion. Again, no one accepted baptism.

Leaving McGuffie to proselyte in Newry, Taylor and Black set out the next morning for Lisburn, once the residence of Black. Taylor hired a “jaunting car”—a two-wheeled open carriage pulled by a horse—to convey them partway to their destination. Along the route, they stopped at the Four Towns of Bellinacrat where a Mr. Wyllie allowed them to hold a meeting in his barn. Although attendance at

the meeting was respectable and the message of the Restoration was civilly received, once again Taylor sensed limited interest in what he knew to be a life-changing message.

Undaunted, Taylor and Black journeyed to the home of Thomas Tait, the farmer Taylor had met through the McGuffies in Liverpool. Tait was delighted to see Taylor and agreed to accompany him and Black to Lisburn. On July 31, as the threesome approached Loughbrickland and its small lake, Tait exclaimed, “So, there is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?”⁸ Upon reaching the lake, Tait and Taylor entered the water, and John Taylor baptized the first Latter-day-Saint convert in Ireland.

Following Tait’s baptism, the men journeyed to the quaint village of Hillsborough and from there to Lisburn. On four different occasions Taylor preached to large crowds gathered in the Lisburn marketplace, but once again no one accepted the invitation to be baptized. After ten days in Ireland and two baptisms—those of Thomas Tait and of an unnamed person—Taylor ended his Irish mission on August 6 and sailed aboard a steamer from Belfast to Glasgow, Scotland. In a journal note to himself, William Black explained why the Irish mission of Elder Taylor ended so abruptly: “Brother Taylor did not stop long with me [in Ireland] as the people of that country did not receive the Gospel.”⁹

Taylor remained only a few days in Scotland before returning to Liverpool. For the next five weeks, he demonstrated dogged determination and confidence in the Lord’s work by delivering a series of lectures in the Music Hall on Bold Street to less-than-enthusiastic listeners. However,

On July 31, 1840, John Taylor baptized Thomas Tait in a lough near Loughbrickland—the first Mormon convert in Ireland.



believing that the message of the Restoration was nevertheless spreading in a satisfactory manner Taylor made plans to take the gospel message to the Isle of Man, an island situated halfway between England and Ireland. Although he was not familiar with the language of the Isle—Manx Gaelic—Taylor wrote to his wife Leonora, “I propose going in a few days ... & E[lder Hiram] Clark is going with me—I feel a disposition to labor in the vineyard as much as I ever did & I feel that the Lord is with me.”¹⁰ Leonora surely rejoiced at this news, for the Isle of Man with its many flower-flecked hills had been the place of her childhood and youth.

Accompanied by Elder Clark and William Mitchell, one of the first Liverpool converts, John Taylor set sail for the Isle of Man on September 16, 1840. After an eighty-mile voyage, the steamer docked at Douglas, the capital of the Isle. On the morning of September 18, Taylor walked with Clark and Mitchell to a secluded field outside Douglas. There, the three paused to pray, pleading that “an effectual door might be opened to them in that island for the proclamation of the gospel; that gainsayers might be put to shame, and that the word might be confirmed by signs following the believers.”¹¹ Elder Taylor then carved their names and the date on stones placed at the foot of a tree. He ordained William Mitchell a deacon and promised Hiram Clark the gift of tongues and the interpretation thereof. Clark then blessed Taylor. Before the brethren separated they spoke in tongues, sang, and prophesied.

Clark and Mitchell began walking to Ramsey, a town about twelve miles north of Douglas. Taylor returned to Douglas, arranging to rent quarters from Solomon and Ann Pitchforth. He also called on Mr. Cain, a bookseller and a well-known Primitive Methodist preacher. Perhaps most importantly, Taylor rented the Wellington Market Hall (also known as the Wellington Rooms), the largest public hall on the Isle of Man, given its seating capacity of a thousand persons.

At the Market Hall, Taylor gave nightly lectures on the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and was the first Latter-day-Saint missionary to preach on the Isle of Man. Intriguingly, enthusiasm for his lectures was fueled in part by the negative responses of such sectarian priests as the Reverend Thomas Hamilton. On the evening of September 28, 1840, a formal debate between the Reverend Hamilton and Elder Taylor occurred before a full house at the Wellington Market Hall. Taylor referenced this debate in a letter to Brigham Young:

On September 18, 1840, John Taylor, Hiram Clark, and William Mitchell arrived at Douglas, the capital of the Isle of Man. Walking to a secluded field, the three paused to pray, pleading that “an effectual door might be opened to them . . . for the proclamation of the gospel.”

“I have had controversy with a Primitive Methodist Preacher [Thomas Hamilton], but of all the lame attempts to oppose the truth that ever I heard I think his was the weakest & the worst & the people were disgusted with him.”¹² A reporter from the local newspaper *The Manx Liberal* generally agreed with Taylor’s assessment:

*[Taylor inflicted] deserved chastisement on the arrogant simpleton, who had given the challenge without being able to utter a single sentence against his opponent; and this he did right well, for while poor Mr. Hamilton writhed beneath his heavy flagellation, it was truly heart-rending to see his [Mr. H’s] agony. There he sat biting his lips, and shaking his head, and every muscle of his distorted countenance seemed to implore the mercy of the meeting.*¹³

The next man to publicly challenge the message of the Restoration was a certain Dr. J. Curren—who did so through a series of newspaper articles. Taylor did not back down from the squabble, writing lengthy rebuttal articles for *The Manx Liberal* and *Manx Sun* which corrected Curren’s false assertions. Taylor also attended to the activities of the Reverend Robert Heys, a Wesleyan Methodist Superintendent whose pamphlets opposed any and all restoration

doctrines expounded by Taylor. On October 3, 1840, Taylor wrote to Brigham Young,

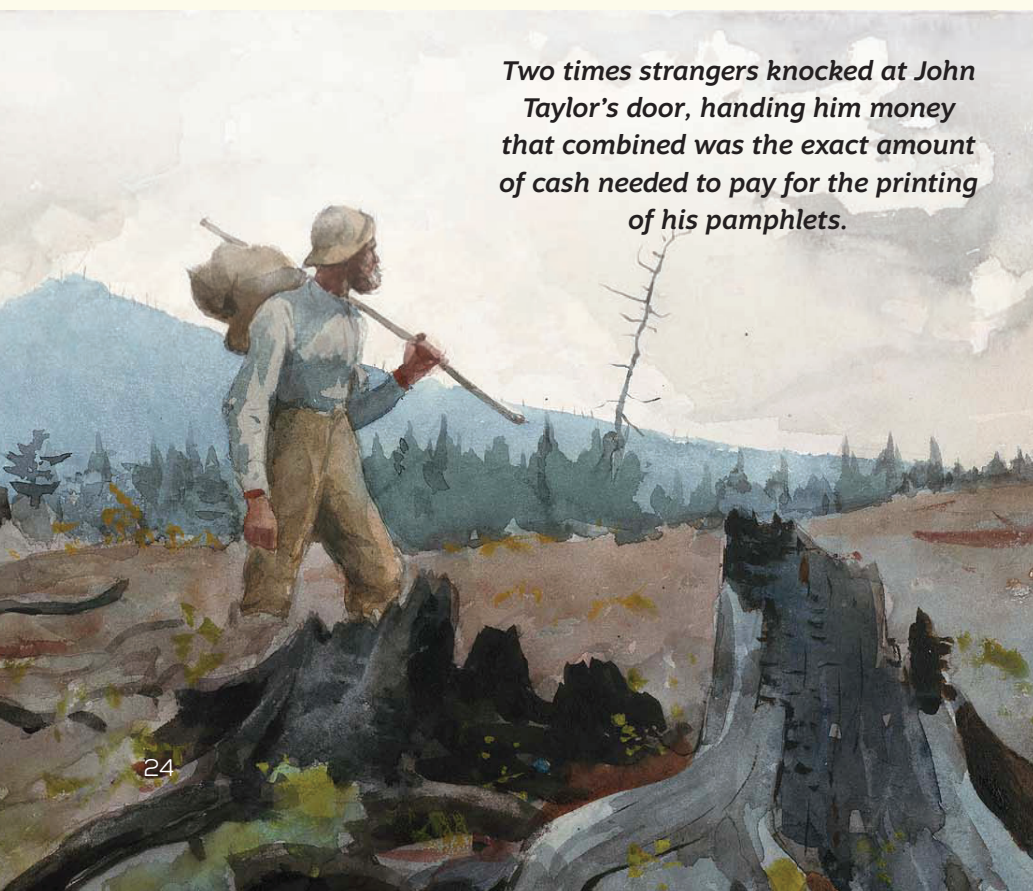
*I have got into the scrape. I shall have to fight through. . . . A Methodist publication has come out in opposition to [the gospel] & the fire is beginning to rage & I do not wish to leave the field until my enemies & the enemies of God lay down their arms or till there is a sufficient army to contend with theirs.*¹⁴

Taylor prepared three tracts to counter those of Heys. The first, *An Answer to Some False Statements and Misrepresentations*, answered questions raised by Heys about the Book of Mormon. The second, *Calumny Refuted and the Truth Defended: Being a Reply to the Second Address of the Rev. Robert Heys*, challenged anti-Mormon explanations of the origins of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The third, *Truth Defined and Methodism Weighed in the Balances and Found Wanting*, was testimonial in nature and included early published arguments of Parley P. Pratt.

Taylor selected the printing house of Penrice and Wallace to publish his pamphlets. Although printers John Penrice and Joseph Ritson Wallace completed the pamphlets on time and as ordered, it was their policy not to deliver

any publications to the purchaser until the cost of printing was paid in full. Meeting their policy was a challenge for Taylor—who had no money. But with implicit faith, he asked the Lord to provide necessary means to defend the doctrines of the Church. A few minutes following his prayer, a young man—a stranger to Taylor—knocked at his door and handed him an envelope. Inside the envelope was money and an unsigned note: “The laborer is worthy of his hire.” The next to knock at the door was a poor fish vendor who proffered him a few coins. The two gifts together provided Taylor the exact amount of cash needed to pay the printer.¹⁵

Two times strangers knocked at John Taylor’s door, handing him money that combined was the exact amount of cash needed to pay for the printing of his pamphlets.





Although Taylor's pamphlets were well written and informative, they did not quell opposition to the Church on the Isle of Man. However, attention and discussions resulting from their publication did lead to baptisms. By late January 1841 there was a congregation of Saints on the Isle of Man numbering about seventy, and on February 3, Taylor was able to write the following to the Prophet Joseph:

I held a discussion with one man, a preacher which had a tendency to enlighten the eyes of the public. Another wrote in the papers, and I answered him, another published pamphlets, and I answered them; another delivered lectures, and I answered them, and finally challenged any of them to meet me before the public and prove the Book of Mormon, and my doctrine, false if they could, but this they were afraid to do and gave up the contest. I see, sir, more clearly every day the impossibility of overturning the principles of truth by any of the foolish dogmas or lame reasoning of this present generation, and how should they? for God has revealed it, and his arms support it.¹⁶

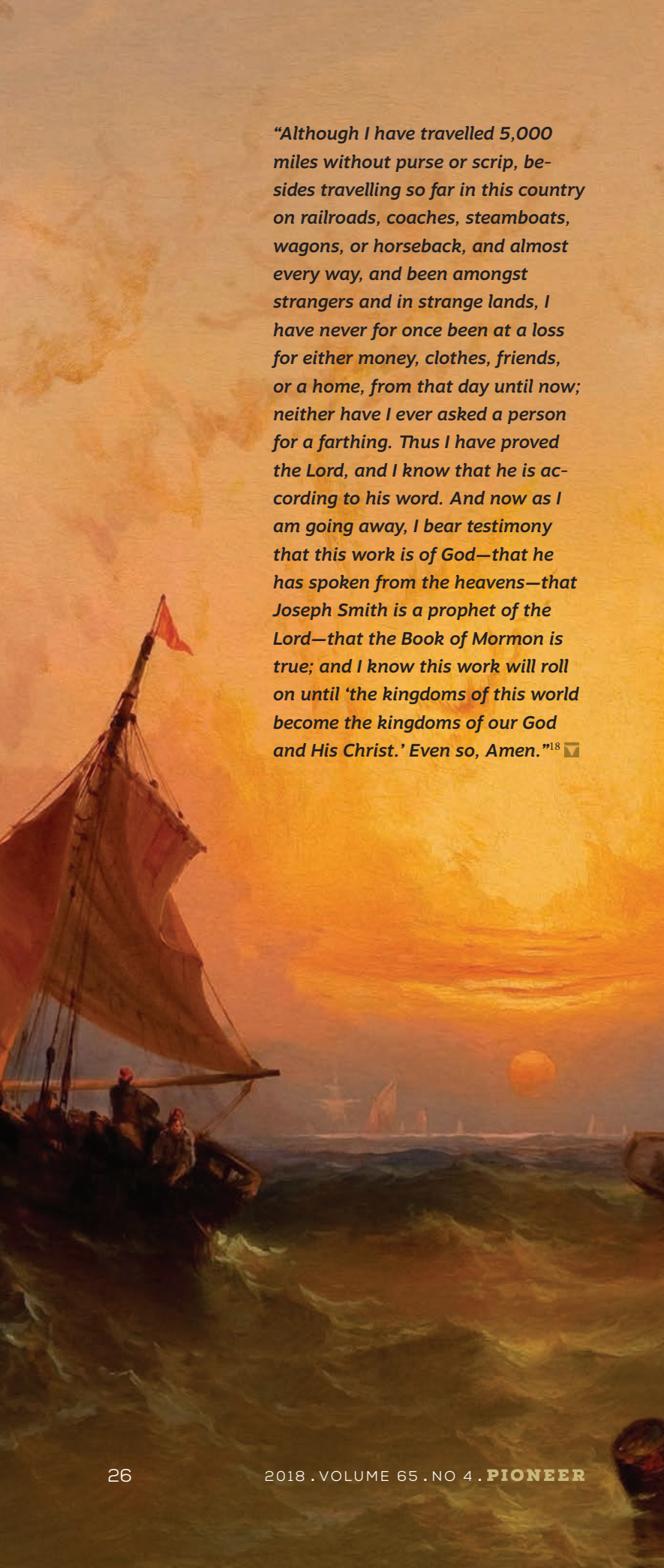
John Taylor did not enjoy legendary success—as did Wilford Woodruff and others—in bringing converts into the Church of Jesus Christ. Yet Taylor quietly directed a

number of faithful Saints into the fold on the Isle of Man, including his landlady, Ann Pitchforth, and her four children. There were others as well. “I went to a country place on the Island,” Taylor wrote, “and sat down in the chimney corner, and talked to a few neighbors, who came in, and baptized eight, and confirmed them the same night, before I left them, nor would they wait until the morning.”¹⁷

John Taylor left the Isle of Man in mid-November 1840 and returned to his missionary labors in Liverpool, but his thoughts were never far from his friends residing on the Isle. When Samuel Haining, a schoolteacher and author of a popular guidebook to the Isle of Man, published a 66-page attack on the restored gospel of Christ—*Mormonism weighed in the Balances of the Sanctuary, and Found Wanting: The Substance of Four Lectures*—Taylor wrote articles in the *Millennial Star* denouncing Haining's motivations and accuracy.

In March 1841 Taylor returned for a week on the Isle of Man. During that week he baptized twelve converts. Other elders—like James Blakeslee, William Mitchell, and Joseph Fielding—followed in Taylor's footsteps. By April 1841 there were 90 members residing on the Isle of Man, including two elders, four priests, and two teachers.

Before returning to the United States and to his beloved Leonora, John Taylor summarized his missionary work and his sure testimony in the *Millennial Star*:



"Although I have travelled 5,000 miles without purse or scrip, besides travelling so far in this country on railroads, coaches, steamboats, wagons, or horseback, and almost every way, and been amongst strangers and in strange lands, I have never for once been at a loss for either money, clothes, friends, or a home, from that day until now; neither have I ever asked a person for a farthing. Thus I have proved the Lord, and I know that he is according to his word. And now as I am going away, I bear testimony that this work is of God—that he has spoken from the heavens—that Joseph Smith is a prophet of the Lord—that the Book of Mormon is true; and I know this work will roll on until 'the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ.' Even so, Amen."¹⁸ ▣

1 B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor* (1963), 67–8. Roberts does not document sources of quotations he assigns to Taylor.

2 John Taylor, "History of John Taylor," in "Histories of the Twelve," microfilm of holograph, p. 274, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Archives; quoted in Richard L. Jensen, "The John Taylor Family," *Ensign*, Feb 1980.

3 See Roberts 40–1; recounted in Jensen.

4 John Taylor to Leonora Taylor, 30 Jan 1840, John Taylor Collection, Church History Library (CHL).

5 James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission 1837–1841: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles* (1992), 114.

6 John Taylor to Joseph Smith, 5 Feb 1841, published in *Times and Seasons* 2.1 (1 May 1841): 400–2.

7 "Sketch of the Travels and Ministry of Elder R. Hedlock," *Millennial Star* 2.6 (Oct 1841), 92.

8 Tait's exclamation is reminiscent of Acts 8:36: "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

9 William Black, as quoted in Joseph Smith Black, "The Diary of Joseph Smith Black, 1836–1910," typescript, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

10 John Taylor, letter to Leonora Taylor, 6 Sep 1840, John Taylor Collection, CHL.

11 Roberts 90–1.

12 John Taylor, letter to Brigham Young, 2 Oct 1840, Brigham Young Papers, CHL.

13 *Manx Liberal*, 5.213 (3 Oct 1840): p. 3, col. 5. Taylor later summarized his early debates in a letter to Parley P. Pratt, 27 Feb 1841, published under "Communications," *Millennial Star* 1.11 (Mar 1841): 276–7.

14 John Taylor, letters to Brigham Young, 2 and 6 Oct 1840, Brigham Young Papers, CHL.

15 This traditional family story is retold in Paul Thomas Smith, "Among Family and Friends: John Taylor—Mission to the British Isles," *Ensign*, March 1987.

16 John Taylor, letter to Joseph Smith, 3 Feb 1841, published as "Very Dear Brother," *Times and Seasons* 2.13 (1 May 1841): 401–2.

17 John Taylor, letter to Joseph Smith, 3 Feb 1841, 402.

18 John Taylor, letter to Parley P. Pratt, published under "Communications," *Millennial Star* 2.1 (May 1841), 15–6.



PIONEER VIGNETTE

King's Arms Inn at Hale, England, is situated very close to the John Taylor boyhood home. The John Taylor Family Organization has documentation that the inn was once owned by James Taylor, father of President John Taylor.

Taylor home, Hale, England. John Taylor was born to James and Agnes Taylor, November 1, 1808. A number of sources list Milnthorpe, Cumbria, UK, as the place where President Taylor was born. Christening sources list his parents as residents of Milnthorpe at the time of his birth. The exact site of President Taylor's birth is not known with certainty, but it is believed that as a boy he lived in the village of Milnthorpe. John Taylor was the only man to serve as President of the Church who was not born in the United States.

Heversham Parish Church. James and Agnes Taylor, parents of John Taylor, were members of record of the Church of England. According to parish records they had their son baptized in the church at Heversham when he was about a month old. John's father had been baptized in that same church building as an infant.

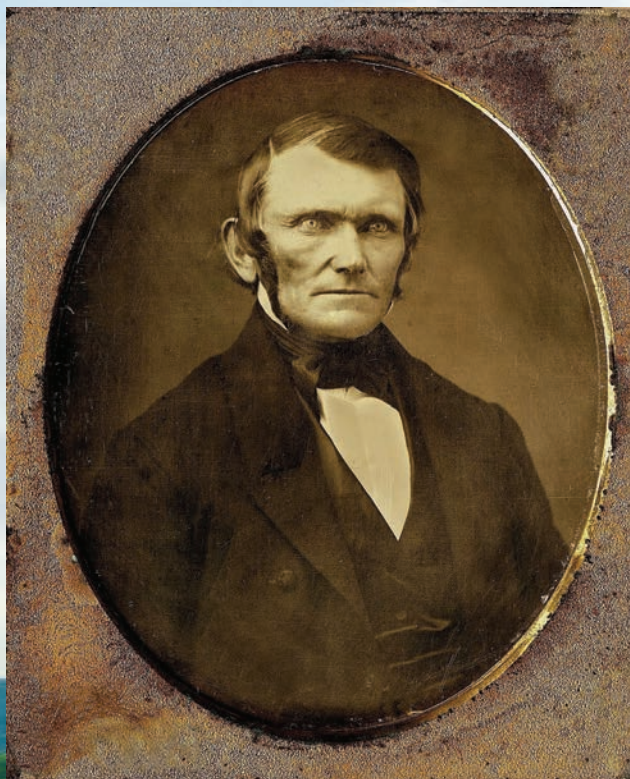
Penrith. A maturing John Taylor learned and practiced the trade of turner or woodworker for a number of years while living in Penrith (below). Having converted from the Church of England, he became a local preacher in the Methodist Church at age 16. On one occasion, he shared a personal experience with a friend. John said that near the village of Penrith he felt the voice of the Spirit giving him a strong impression on his mind that he was to go to America to preach the gospel. ▣

PHOTOS BY KENNETH MAYS



WILFORD WOODRUFF

LATTER-DAY SAINT
MISSIONARIES,
AND THE
BRITISH MISSION
1839-1841



BY THOMAS G. ALEXANDER ¹

Members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles responded to an 1838 revelation given to Joseph Smith and took up their missions to Great Britain in 1839. They left their families and fellow Saints in difficult circumstances and embarked on their journeys despite their poverty—they were to travel without purse or scrip and rely on donations to support themselves—and debilitating illness. Wilford Woodruff was suffering from malaria, as was his wife, Phoebe.² When he left with John Taylor on August 8, 1839, Taylor's wife, Leonora, and their three children were ill with the same disease.³ As Joseph Smith greeted them before their departure, Woodruff commented that "I feel and look more like a subject for the dissecting room than a missionary." Smith told him to "Get up and go along; all will be

right with you!"⁴ Malaria struck Taylor just beyond Indianapolis.⁵ When Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, George A. Smith, Theodore Turley, and Reuben Hedlock left Nauvoo on September 20 and 21, they were all afflicted with malaria.⁶

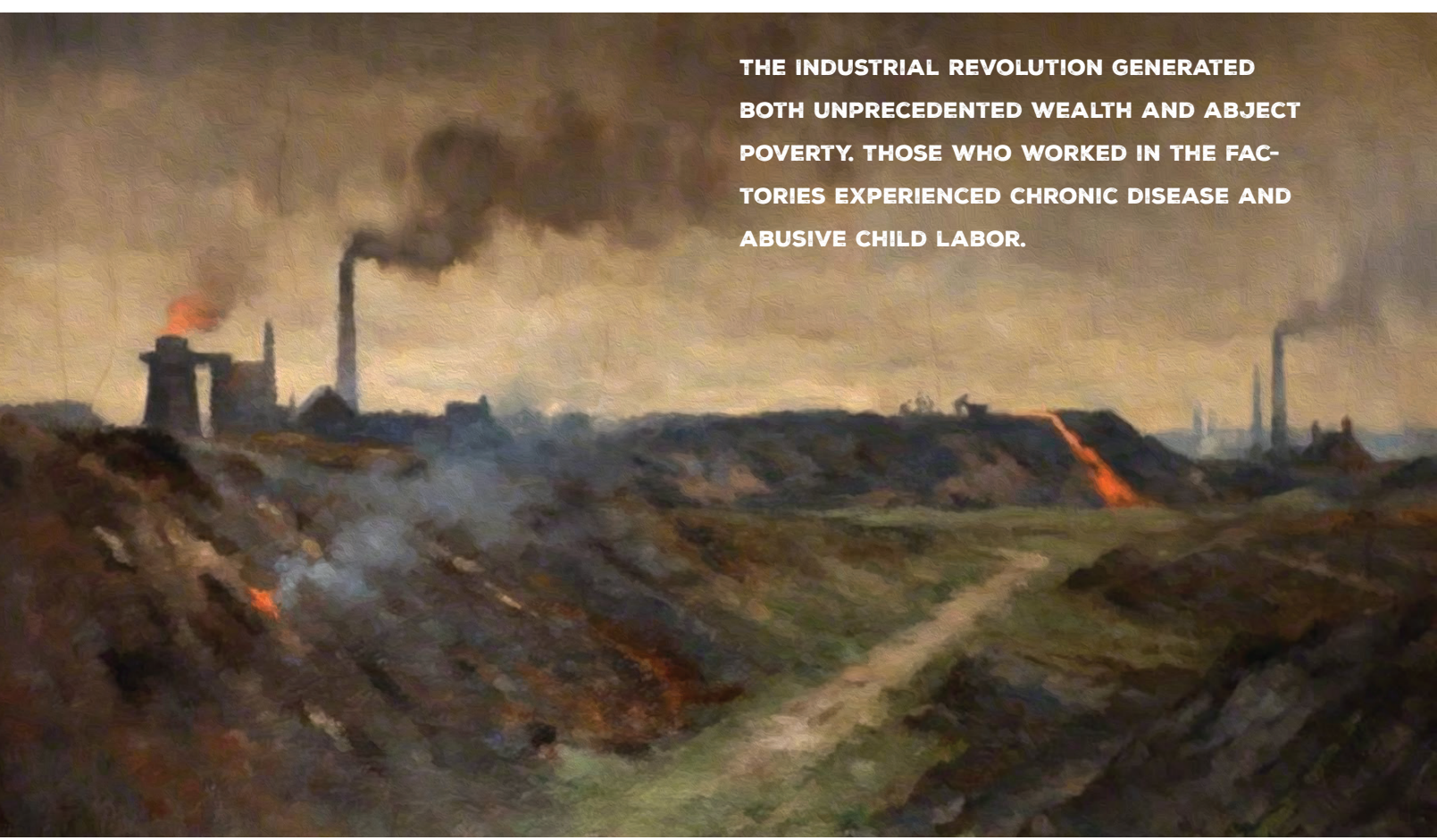
After sailing from New York, the missionaries arrived in Liverpool at various times. Hiram Clark, Alexander Wright, and Samuel Mulliner arrived before the Apostles on December 8, 1839. Woodruff, Taylor, and Turley arrived on January 11, 1840 after a gale-ravaged voyage that added seasickness to their suffering. Young, Kimball, Smith, Orson Pratt, Parley P. Pratt, and Hedlock did not arrive until April 6.⁷

This historic 1839–41 mission to the British Isles is significant not only for the perseverance of the illness-plagued missionaries, but to a greater degree for the large number of convert baptisms

that resulted. In 1839 when the missionaries left Nauvoo, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles consisted of ten men (Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Parley P. Pratt, William Smith, Orson Pratt, John E. Page, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith). All of them except William Smith and John Page accepted the mission call.⁸ The first missionary effort to Great Britain had taken place in 1837–38 when Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Willard Richards, Joseph Fielding, John Goodson, Isaac Russell, and John Snider served there with initial success. Willard Richards remained in England and continued to labor after the others returned to the US in 1838.⁹ Richards was ordained an Apostle on April 14, 1840 by newly arrived Brigham Young, becoming the ninth Apostle to serve in Great Britain during the crucial years of 1840–41.¹⁰ Their shared mission experiences in Britain welded these young men into a unit of extraordinary solidarity and personal affection as they solidified their status as the core of Church leadership.¹¹

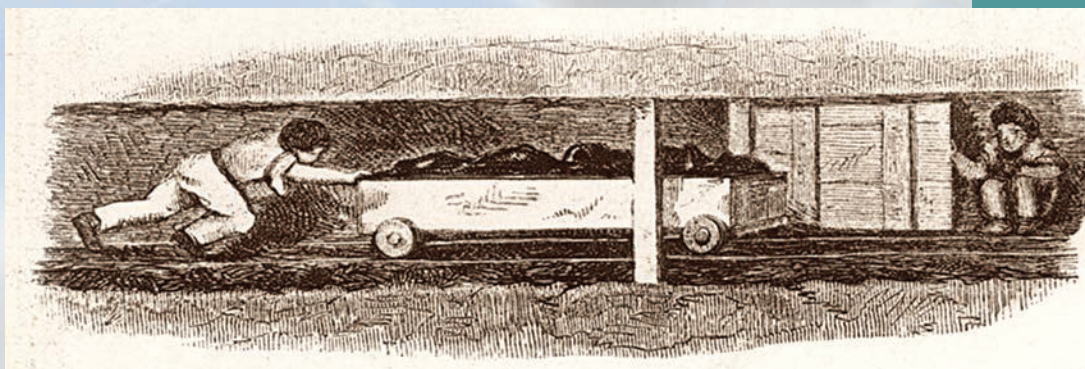
The first area in which these missionaries proselyted was industrializing very rapidly. Although large-scale manufacturing had begun in the British Isles during the eighteenth century, it intensified when Great Britain became the dominant world power following Napoleon's defeat in 1815. Lancashire, west Yorkshire, and Manchester formed the heart of the world's preeminent cotton textile manufacturing.¹² Further to the south around Birmingham, Britons had established the world's foremost iron foundries. Describing this region, Woodruff said that he "never saw anything that comes so near the description of the Lake of fire & Brimstone Spoken of by the Revelator John."¹³

Industrialization generated both unprecedented wealth and abject poverty. Those who worked in the factories experienced chronic disease and abusive child labor. Unimaginable poverty and debilitation plagued those who were unemployed. Most Latter-day Saint converts came from the working classes, which experienced both sets of conditions.¹⁴

A painting of a dark, industrial landscape. In the foreground, a dirt path leads from the bottom center towards the middle ground. The landscape is filled with dark, rocky terrain and patches of green grass. In the background, several industrial structures are visible, including tall smokestacks emitting thick, dark smoke that fills the sky. A bright orange glow, possibly from a furnace or fire, is visible on the right side of the middle ground. The overall atmosphere is somber and industrial.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION GENERATED BOTH UNPRECEDENTED WEALTH AND ABJECT POVERTY. THOSE WHO WORKED IN THE FACTORIES EXPERIENCED CHRONIC DISEASE AND ABUSIVE CHILD LABOR.

An acute observer, Woodruff described these oppressive conditions. After reaching Preston on January 13, 1840, Wilford encountered “streets crouded with the poor both male & female going to & from the factories with their . . . Clogg Shoes . . . The poor,” he said, “are in as great Bondage as the children of Israel in Egypt.” Nevertheless, although the Saints lived in poverty, they had “warm hearts.”¹⁵



On January 18 Woodruff, Richards, Clark, and Turley met William Clayton in Manchester, an industrial city of 320,000. Factories filled orders seasonally, so between orders factory workers were “flung” into the ranks of the unemployed and into “uter starvation.” Harsh working conditions and unemployment brutalized many into physical and mental illness. Woodruff wrote that after healing eleven sick members in the Manchester area, the missionaries also cast a devil from a deranged child.¹⁶

Woodruff visualized such conditions as evidence of the proximity of Christ’s second coming and the fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel, John, and Joseph Smith: “Signs that are appearing in the heavens & earth,” witnessed “the fulfillment of the word of God.”¹⁷

In council at Preston on January 17, the Apostles assigned John Taylor and Joseph Fielding to Liverpool, Hiram Clark and William Clayton to Manchester, Wilford Woodruff and Theodore Turley to the Staffordshire Potteries, and Willard Richards wherever the spirit directed him. Alexander Wright and Samuel Mulliner remained in Scotland, where they had proselyted since December 1839.¹⁸

Changing economic and social circumstances ripened many in the British working classes to accept the new religion, and Woodruff found converts not only in industrial cities but also in rural areas in southern Herefordshire and nearby Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. Those who converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—especially in Herefordshire, Preston, and their environs—were much like the primitive restorationist Christians whom missionaries had

converted in the United States and Canada. They had been seeking charismatic manifestations reminiscent of the primitive church and doctrines founded on New Testament Christianity that emphasized Christian love and concern. In their search they had generally followed one of three roads: they had divorced themselves from organized religion, become independent restorationists, or joined dissenting religious organizations.¹⁹

After the January 1840 council in Preston, Woodruff and Turley traveled to the Staffordshire Potteries, a locale famous for its production of ceramics. Centered in the Trent River Valley about thirty-five miles south of Manchester, the area had become famous after Josiah Wedgwood established a manufacturing plant at Hanley in the eighteenth century.²⁰ British members who converted during the 1837–38 missions established branches in the region. The largest was at Burslem, where Alfred Cordon presided. In June 1840 when the Apostles organized a local conference, they called Cordon as presiding elder.²¹

Wilford Woodruff remained in Staffordshire from January 21 to March 3, 1840. He preached and baptized in many towns in the area, and he learned the local culture by visiting with people and touring manufacturing plants. On February 10, 1840, England celebrated the marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. In a whimsical mood, Woodruff “thought it no more than just & right that [since the people are celebrating the marriage of the Queen] I should honor the King of heaven by . . . preaching the gospel of his Son Jesus Christ.” Woodruff, Alfred Cordon, William Bradbury, and George Simpson “preached the gospel” in Longton, Staffordshire on that date.

On March 2, 1840, “The Lord warned [him] . . . to go to the South.” In company with William Benbow, a

Alfred Gordon

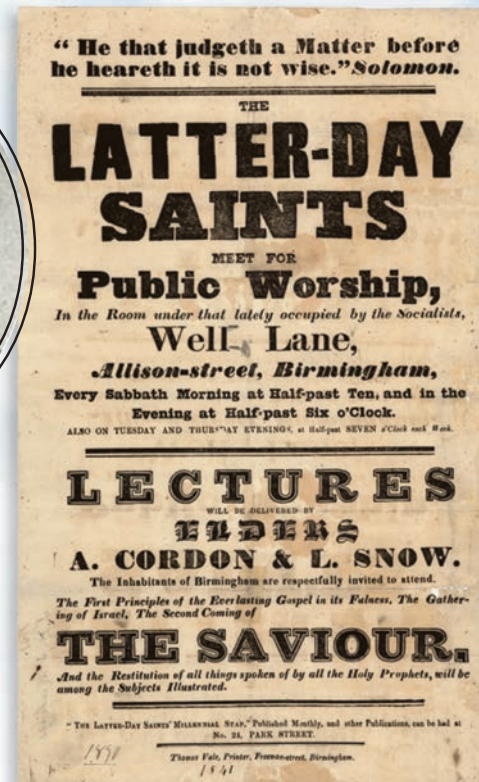


Hanley shopkeeper, Woodruff traveled to the home of William's brother John and his wife Jane at the 300-acre Hill Farm, Castle Froome, near Ledbury in Herefordshire. Wilford's journey to Herefordshire launched the most remarkable missionary success in the history of the Church. The Benbows belonged to the United Brethren, an offshoot of primitive Methodism.²² After two days of preaching, Woodruff baptized six people, including John and Jane Benbow and four United Brethren ministers. He continued preaching, and after two weeks he baptized Thomas Kington, superintendent of the United Brethren circuit.²³ After thirty-six days, the Church in southern Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and northern Gloucestershire consisted of 163 members including forty who were formerly United Brethren ministers.²⁴

On April 18 the Apostles gathered for a conference in Preston. They assigned Heber C. Kimball to visit the Lancashire churches he had established earlier. Orson Pratt went to Scotland, John Taylor to Liverpool, the Isle of Man and northern Ireland. Parley P. Pratt went to Manchester to begin a publication program, and George A. Smith left for the Staffordshire Potteries. Brigham Young and Willard Richards accompanied Woodruff to Herefordshire, remaining there until June 26 when they departed for a conference in Manchester.²⁵ Woodruff then returned to Herefordshire with George A. Smith. Converts such as Kington and Benbow had also begun preaching and baptizing, so that by early August nearly 800 members lived round about.²⁶

The labors of Woodruff and the others in Herefordshire were significant for various reasons. Under British law only licensed ministers could preach; places of worship had to be formally licensed; and churches were required to be officially recognized. On March 16 Woodruff obtained a license from the justice of the peace of Hereford County. He must have choked when he had to declare himself "a Protestant" and swear allegiance to Queen Victoria.²⁷

A few days later, the Anglican parish's rector sent a constable to arrest Woodruff for preaching without a license. Woodruff verified he had a license and invited the constable to hear his sermon. The constable listened to Woodruff's sermon and then offered himself for baptism.



Afterward, the rector sent two of his clerks to gather information on Woodruff, and they too asked for baptism.²⁸

On June 11, 1840, missionaries converted the Bran Green and Gadfield Elm Branch of the Froomes Hill Circuit of the United Brethren to the Bran Green and Gadfield Elm Latter-day Saint Conference with former superintendent Thomas Kington as presiding elder. The Latter-day Saints thus became licensed owners of the Gadfield Elm Chapel and of forty-one other preaching places.²⁹

Some converts in Herefordshire enjoyed above-average economic status. Several contributed substantially to the missionary work. Donations of £200 came from the Benbows and £100 from Kington.³⁰ With these funds, Young returned to Manchester to publish the Book of Mormon and a hymn book.³¹ On May 27 Pratt, as editor, began printing *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*.³²

These conversions generated fierce opposition from the Anglican clergy and others. They petitioned the Archbishop of Canterbury to support a law banning Mormons from preaching in Great Britain. The archbishop refused, citing his belief in religious toleration. He told them to concern themselves more with the souls of their parishioners and less with the sermons of Latter-day Saint elders.³³ Missionaries also encountered violent antagonism from mobs at various places. During one baptismal service, a mob pelted Woodruff's "Body with stones."³⁴

Such violence did not surprise Woodruff and his colleagues since they expected it as the devil's reward.³⁵ Woodruff had dreams of serpents, but he had little trouble besting the reptiles.³⁶ He dreamed one night that a large church and the surrounding countryside caught fire, and he imagined it to be symbolic of the Saints' continued success in gaining new converts.³⁷ Woodruff and other missionaries also dreamed of fishing, perhaps thinking of Jesus' admonition to follow him and become fishers of men.³⁸ George A. Smith dreamt of catching fish in November 1840 at Birmingham.³⁹

Woodruff conceived a historical context for their success. In May 1840, in "a lonely walk & meditation [and having read Parley] P. Pratt's remarks upon the 'eternal duration of matter,' he ascended the Herefordshire Beacon, a prominent peak north of Ledbury. Viewing abandoned entrenchments and contemplating forgotten warriors who had made them, he reflected on past history, on Pratt's treatise, and on his understanding of ancient and modern revelation. "God," he thought, "will soon level all hills exalt all valleys & redeem the earth from the curse of sin & prepare it for the abode of the Saints of the MOST HIGH." Further "upon the rise, progress, decline, & fall of the empires of the earth, & the revolutions which must still transpire before the winding up scene & the coming of Christ."⁴⁰

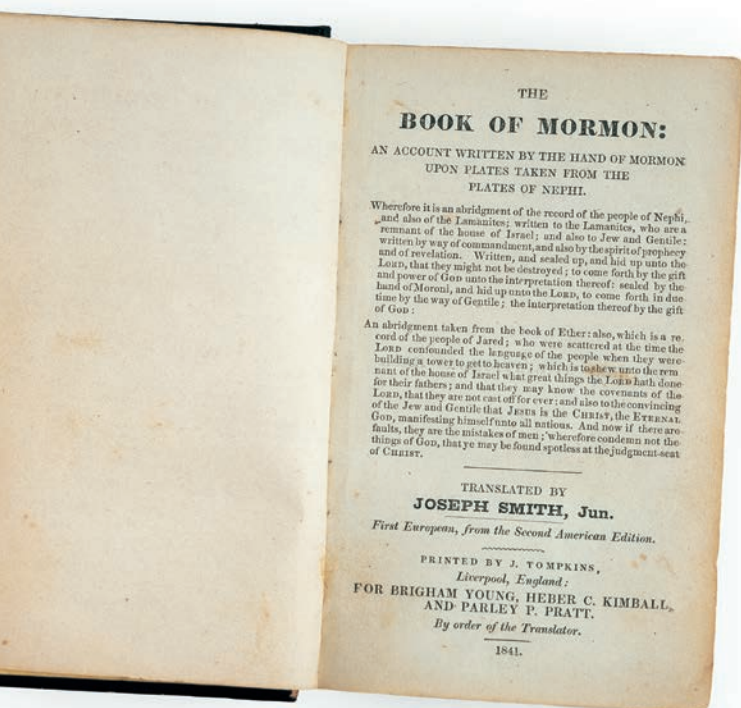
After proselytizing in southwest England, Woodruff, Smith, and Kimball left for London on August 18. A city of 1.5 million inhabitants, London was the center of the world's largest empire.⁴¹ The apostles found conditions in London contrasted with those of the cotton towns, potteries, and farm villages. They encountered the usual opposition from ministers, but here they also found many working class people indifferent to their message.⁴²

During the nineteenth century, the city had spread outward quite rapidly. After meeting with Mrs. William Algood, Theodore Turley's sister-in-law, Woodruff and his companions rented lodgings near her.⁴³ After finding little success in the inner city, they moved to the rapidly urbanizing parishes of St. Luke's Old Street, Shoreditch, and Clerkenwell.⁴⁴ They settled at No. 40 Ironmonger Row near St. Luke's Church and near the home of their first convert, a watchmaker named Henry Connor.

Finding it difficult to secure buildings in which to preach, they held meetings in the open in Tabernacle Square just off Old Street and in Bough Court near Shoreditch High Street. Eventually, Woodruff rented a hall at Barrett's Academy on King Square (now Cyrus Street) just off Goswell Street in Clerkenwell. They baptized their converts in a private bath in Tabernacle Square.

London exhibited considerable class distinction and the extreme poverty seen elsewhere, but it had not undergone the rapid industrial growth that drew countless people into the rootless conditions that plagued the Midlands and north. Woodruff and his fellow missionaries met with primitive restorationists such as the New Christian Movement led by Scottish minister Robert Aitken. Discussions with Aitken and his ministers revealed they had no interest in following the United Brethren into

DONATIONS OF £200 CAME FROM THE BENBOWS AND £100 FROM KINGTON. WITH THESE FUNDS, YOUNG RETURNED TO MANCHESTER TO PUBLISH THE BOOK OF MORMON AND A HYMN BOOK.



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE BOOK OF MORMON PUBLISHED IN 1841
© BY INTELLECTUAL RESERVE, INC.

The Church of Jesus Christ.⁴⁵ Followers of the millennialist Joanna Southcott, who believed she would be the mother of the returning Christ, turned a deaf ear and disrupted Latter-day Saint meetings. The missionaries had little success with followers of Edward Irving, a former Presbyterian and founder of the Catholic Apostolic church. Woodruff and Kimball converted an Independent (Congregationalist) minister, James Albon, together with some of his family, but his congregation did not follow their pastor's example.⁴⁶

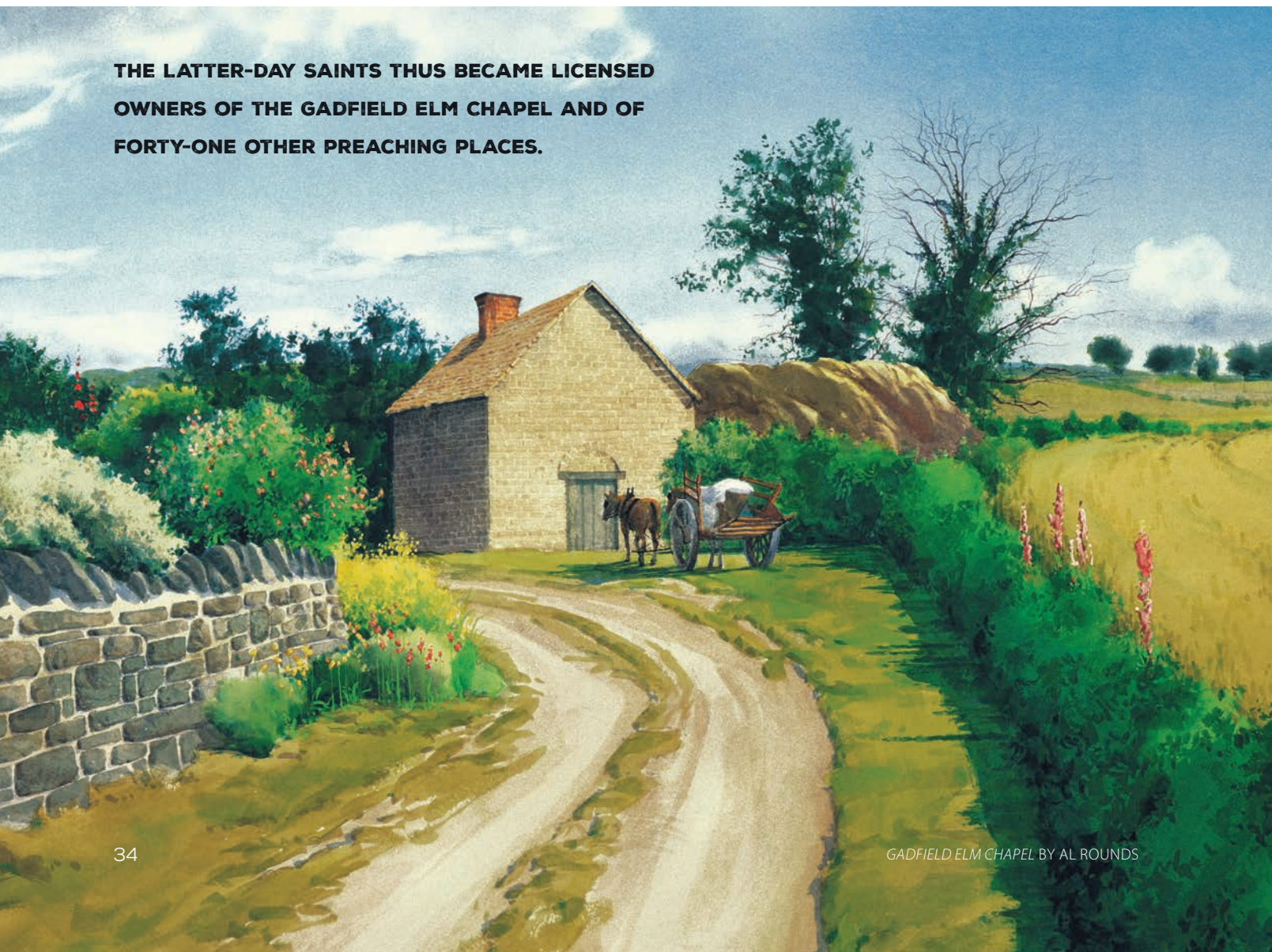
Under these circumstances, Woodruff's ordinarily confident attitude flagged considerably. On October 18 a personage—Woodruff thought he was the Devil—appeared and tried to choke him. Prayer saved Wilford from destruction.⁴⁷ He dreamed again about serpent attacks, and though a tiger protected him from one attack, another serpent bit him.⁴⁸ Woodruff came to believe that the lack of success in London accounted "for my dreams about serpents."⁴⁹

After the conversion of the Albon family some things changed. Kimball baptized Dr. William Copeland, a physician at the College of Surgeons at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and eight others.⁵⁰ In early February, they baptized Susanna M. Sangiovanni, wife of one of Napoleon's Italian officers.⁵¹ By February 13, shortly before Lorenzo Snow assumed leadership in London, they had converted forty-nine people.⁵²

In addition to preaching the gospel, the missionaries visited sites of culture and history. These included the British Museum, the College of Surgeons at Lincoln's Inn Fields, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Tower of London, Buckingham Palace, the Queen's Stables, the National Gallery of Art, and the anchor chains and cables test facility in Woolwich.

Concerned with rumors of war between the US and Britain in December of 1840, Joseph Smith advised the

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS THUS BECAME LICENSED OWNERS OF THE GADFIELD ELM CHAPEL AND OF FORTY-ONE OTHER PREACHING PLACES.



Americans to leave England. New York state officials had arrested a British officer near the Canadian border, and Britain threatened war if he were detained.⁵³ The missionaries anticipated that a third war with Great Britain might foreshadow Christ's second coming. Except for Parley Pratt and Orson Hyde, the members of the Quorum of the Twelve left England to return to the US in April 1841. Pratt remained in England to publish the *Millennial Star*, the Book of Mormon, and a hymn book; and Hyde began his historic journey to the Holy Land.

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of the Apostolic mission of 1839–41. By late December 1840, nearly 6,500 members had been converted. With Joseph Smith's emphasis on gathering, many of the converts soon left or planned to leave for Nauvoo.⁵⁴ Not only did the British Saints constitute an important addition to church membership, most remained loyal to the Twelve

following Joseph Smith's martyrdom. Their impact continued after the trek west to Utah. Historian Dean May calculated that more than half of the Saints in Utah during the 1850s were British converts and their children.

These missionaries had found an extraordinarily ripe field. During the years between 1837 and 1852, Mormon missionaries "reaped 'the most spectacular harvest of souls since Wesley's time.'" They tapped the large body of working class British dissenters, primitivist seekers, restorationists, and millennialists. Of these, by far the largest contingent came from Wesleyan traditions, including the Methodists and others.⁵⁵ These people resented the growing irreligiosity of society and the increasingly secular values of middleclass Britons. They were looking for the restoration of Christ's primitive church with its charismatic gifts and prophecy and were awaiting his second coming. ▣

1 Thomas G. Alexander is the Lemuel Hardison Redd Jr. Professor Emeritus of Western American History at Brigham Young University. Portions of this article appeared previously in Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, A Mormon Prophet* (1991). Reprinted with permission of Signature Books.

2 Wilford W. Woodruff, *Leaves from My Journal* (1882), 69.

3 Samuel W. Taylor, *The Kingdom or Nothing: The Life of John Taylor, Militant Mormon* (1976), 60–1.

4 Woodruff, *Leaves*, 69.

5 Taylor, 63–4.

6 Wilford Woodruff, "Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898" (1983–1984), ed. Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols., 1:356–7 (29 Aug–2 Sep 1839).

7 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:360–75 (21 Sep–31 Dec 1839), 401–3 (1–11 Jan 1840); Taylor, 65–6.

8 Smith and Page would later leave the Church during the chaos following Joseph Smith's murder.

9 For more details of the first British mission, see James B. Allen and Thomas G. Alexander, *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton, 1840 to 1842* (1974); James

R. Moss, "The Gospel Restored to England," in V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter, eds., *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles, 1837–1987* (1987), 71–103.

10 Willard Richards, "Journals and Papers, 1821–1854," CHL, vol. 6, image 14.

11 See Ronald K. Esplin, "The 1840–41 Mission to England and the Development of the Quorum of the Twelve," in Richard L. Jensen and Malcolm R. Thorp, eds., *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain* (1989), 70–91.

12 Malcolm R. Thorp, "The Setting for the Restoration in Britain: Political, Social, and Economic Conditions," in Bloxham, Moss and Porter, eds., 45.

13 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:471–72 (26 Jan 1840).

14 See Thorp, "Setting," 47–51; and John F. C. Harrison, "The Popular History of Early Victorian Britain; A Mormon Contribution," *Journal of Mormon History* 14 (1988), 3–15.

15 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:405 (20 Jan 1840); George A. Smith, "My Journal," *Instructor* 82:10 (Oct 1947), 477 (16 Aug 1840).

16 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:409 (20 Jan 1840).

17 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:408–10 (18–20 Jan 1840).

18 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:406–7 (17 Jan 1840).

19 W.H.G. Armytage, *Heavens Below: Utopian Experiments in England, 1560–1960* (1961), 260, quoted in Malcolm R. Thorp, "The Religious Backgrounds of Mormon Converts in Britain, 1837–52," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977), 52.

20 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:410 (21 Jan 1840).

21 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:474 (29 Jun 1840).

22 Lee E. Grugel, *Society and Religion During the Age of Industrialization: Christianity in Victorian England* (1979), 29–30. The Primitive Methodists had been organized in 1810. Upset with the increasing centralization of Methodist organization and what they believed to be Wesley's simple teachings. They emphasized millennialist principles and moral reform, especially temperance.

23 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:423–26 (4–21 Mar 1840).

24 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:437 (15 Apr 1840); *ibid.*, 1:440 (Apr 1840); Baptismal Record, *ibid.* 1:379–83. Later Woodruff would remember that he

baptized 600 in the first thirty days (*Deseret News*, 31 Oct 1896). This memory does not coincide with the record he kept at the time.

25 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:441 (18 Apr 1840); for a colorful narrative of John Taylor's brief experience in Ireland, see Taylor, 70–72.

26 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:488–9 (2 Aug 1840).

27 English Preaching License, 16 Mar 1840, "Wilford Woodruff Unprocessed Correspondence," CHL.

28 Woodruff, *Leaves*, 81; Woodruff, "Journal," 1:435, 440, 461 (April 1840, *passim*, 15 Apr 1840, 18 Jun 1840). There are inconsistencies in the dates in these references suggesting that Woodruff may have prepared the manuscript for *Leaves* from memory.

29 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:440, 457–59 (April 1840, *passim*, 14 June 1840).

30 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:449, 451 (14, 19 May 1840).

31 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:451 (20 May 1840).

32 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:454 (30 May 1840).

33 Woodruff, *Leaves*, 81.

34 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:432–3, 449 (5, 9 Apr 1840, 14 May 1840).

35 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:428–9 (26 Mar 1840).

36 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:430 (28 Mar 1840).

37 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:456–7 (8 Jun 1840).

38 Matthew 4:18–22 KJV.

39 Smith, "Journal," *Instructor* 83 (Feb 1948): 71 (10 Nov 1840).

40 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:446–7 (11 May 1840).

41 Thorp, "Setting," 45.

42 James B. Allen and Malcom R. Thorp, "The Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840–41: Mormon Apostles and the Working Classes," *BYU Studies* 15:4 (1 Oct 1975), 509.

43 Stanley B. Kimball, Heber C. Kimball, Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer (1981), 72.

44 Allen and Thorp, "Mission," 509–10.

45 Smith, "Journal," *Instructor* 82 (Dec. 1947): 579 (7 Sep 1840). Smith said that they visited Aitken, who told them he was afraid of the Mormons because their doctrines were so near the gospel that it would be impossible to detect their errors. When Kimball and Smith reported this visit to Woodruff, he interpreted their impression of Aitken to be that the minister had acknowledged the correctness of their doctrine. Woodruff,

"Journal," 1:509 (7 Sep 1840). At Doncaster about twenty-five Aitkenites became Mormons. John F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millennialism* (1979), 189.

46 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:549, 568, 577–8, 2:25, 2:32 (15 Nov 1840), 6, 10–11 Dec 1840, 8, 23 Jan 1841). On Southcott, see Harrison, *The Second Coming*, chap. 5.

47 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:532 (18 Oct 1840).

48 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:586 (29–30 Dec 1840).

49 Woodruff, "Journal," 2:24 (6 Jan 1841).

50 Woodruff, "Journal," 1:553; 2:28, 30 (30 Nov 1840, 12, 17 Jan 1841).

51 Woodruff, "Journal," 2:32, 39–40 (23 Jan 1841, 7 Feb 1841).

52 Woodruff, "Journal," 2:45 (14 Feb 1841).

53 Woodruff, "Journal," 2:41–4, 47 (12, 15 Feb 1841).

54 Allen and Alexander, eds., *Manchester Mormons*, 172; Woodruff, "Journal," 2:92 (20 Apr 1841); Wilford Woodruff to Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith, 12 Sep 1840, "Woodruff Unprocessed Correspondence," CHL.

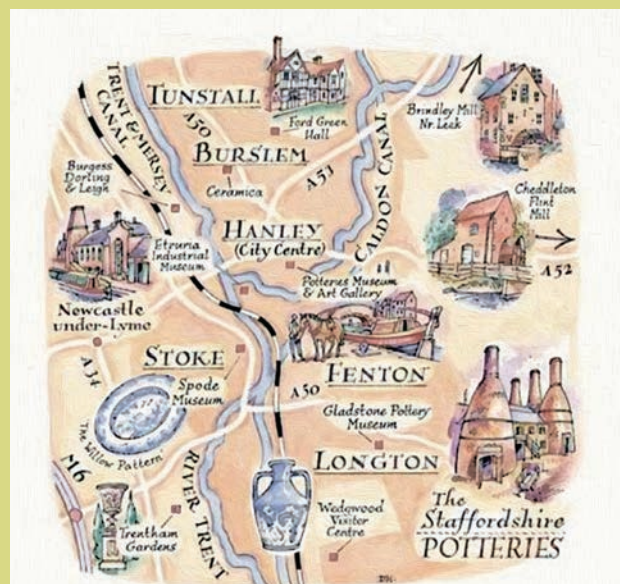
55 Thorp, "Religious Backgrounds," 60–63.

WHAT ARE THE "POTTERIES"?

Journals and letters of the early missionaries to the British Isles sometimes refer to the "Staffordshire Potteries" and the "London Potteries" as places where they preached and found success with working-class families. The Staffordshire Potteries were a group of six towns—Burslem, Fenton, Hanley, Longton, Stoke, and Tunstall—in the West Midlands of England in the county of Staffordshire that became the center of the pottery or porcelain industry in England. These towns are now a single city known as Stoke-On-Trent. Wedgwood, Spode, and Minton are the names of families from the Staffordshire Potteries who became prominent for manufacturing fine porcelain.

The Potteries District of London was also a center for the manufacture of ceramics using clay from the low-lying fields of the area, but its products never achieved the

quality and fame of the Staffordshire wares. The area had become a very low-class neighborhood by the late 1840s and was often riddled by disease due to poor drainage of waste water from residences and manufacturers.



THE BEGINNINGS OF THE
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN

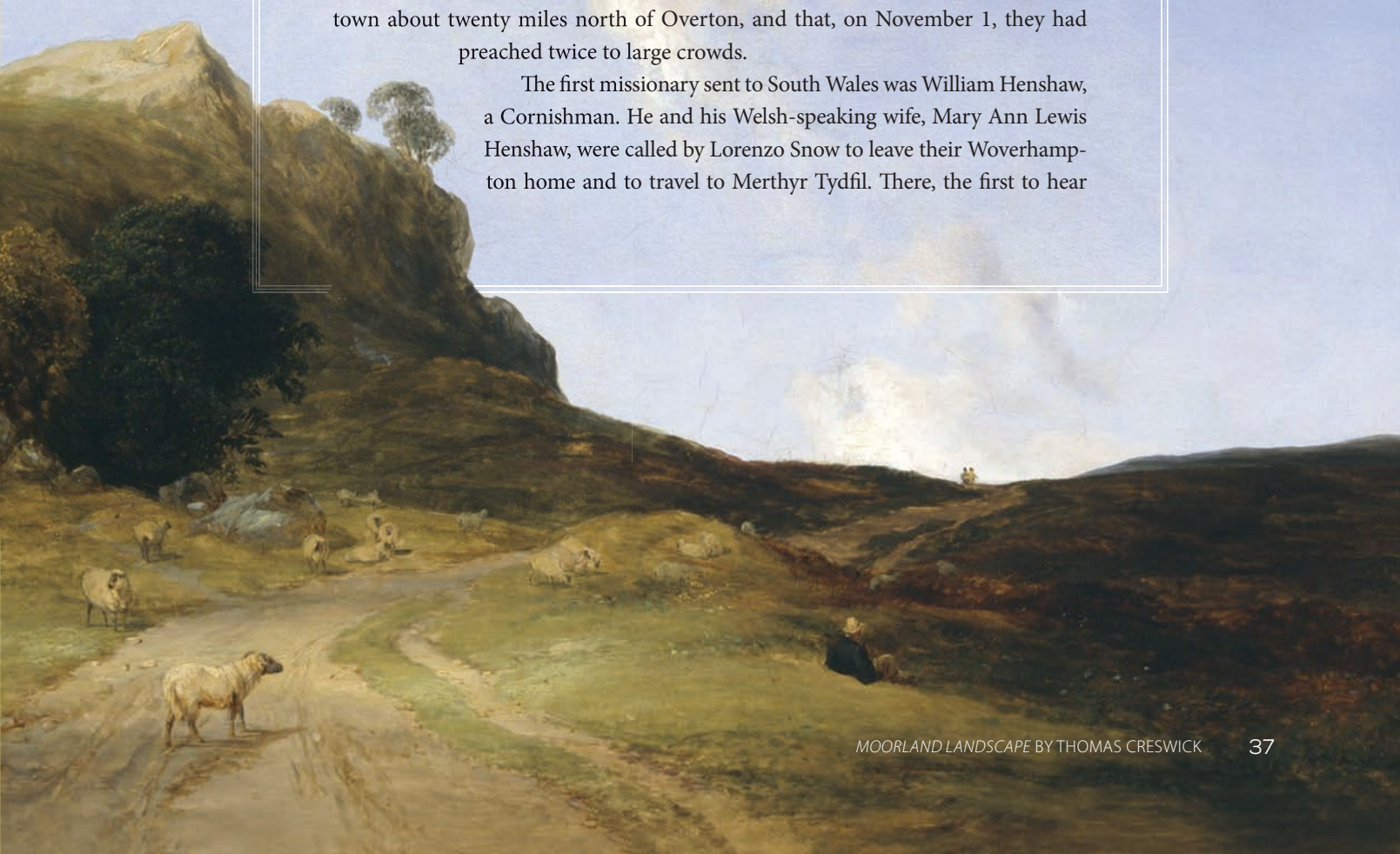
Wales

BY RONALD D. DENNIS

When Elder Heber C. Kimball and his group of missionaries set foot in England in 1837 they became the first to proclaim the restored gospel in Great Britain. But the proselytizing effort would not be extended to the Principality of Wales for another three years. At a conference in Manchester held October 6, 1840, Elder Henry Royle was called “to go to Cly, in Flintshire.”¹ The mistakenly transcribed “Cly” is no doubt “Cloy”—then a small string of farmhouses situated on the outskirts of Overton, a small town located in northeast Wales just across the border with England.

Frederick Cook, a priest assigned to accompany Royle, recorded in his journal that he and his companion arrived in Cloy on October 16 and that, two days later, they “commenced baptizing” in the River Dee. In a letter printed in the *Millennial Star* Royle reported that, by October 30, a branch of thirty-two members had been established in Overton,² certainly an impressive accomplishment in such a short time. Just over a month later, on December 3, Kimball wrote to his wife that, on the evening of October 31, he and Brigham Young had arrived in Hawarden, a Welsh town about twenty miles north of Overton, and that, on November 1, they had preached twice to large crowds.

The first missionary sent to South Wales was William Henshaw, a Cornishman. He and his Welsh-speaking wife, Mary Ann Lewis Henshaw, were called by Lorenzo Snow to leave their Woverhampton home and to travel to Merthyr Tydfil. There, the first to hear



their message was the family of William Rees Davies, a tailor. The Davies family was baptized February 19, 1843.

Soon, other families and individuals became interested in the Henshaws' message, and many more baptisms followed. Their success in establishing The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in South Wales was met with great opposition from ministers in the region.³ For example, the Reverend William Robert Davies (apparently no relation of William Rees Davies) of the Baptist church in Dowlais, located two miles from Merthyr Tydfil, became one of the most vociferous opponents of Henshaw and the Welsh Saints. It was Davies who coined the epithet "Latter-day Satanists."

Just one month after the William Rees Davies family was baptized, a young Welsh immigrant to the United States named Dan Jones received baptism in the icy waters of the Mississippi River near St. Louis, Missouri. Because the histories of Jones and William Davies would intersect three years later when the two joined forces in proclaiming the restored gospel to the Welsh, it is important to consider some of the experiences of Jones following his baptism.

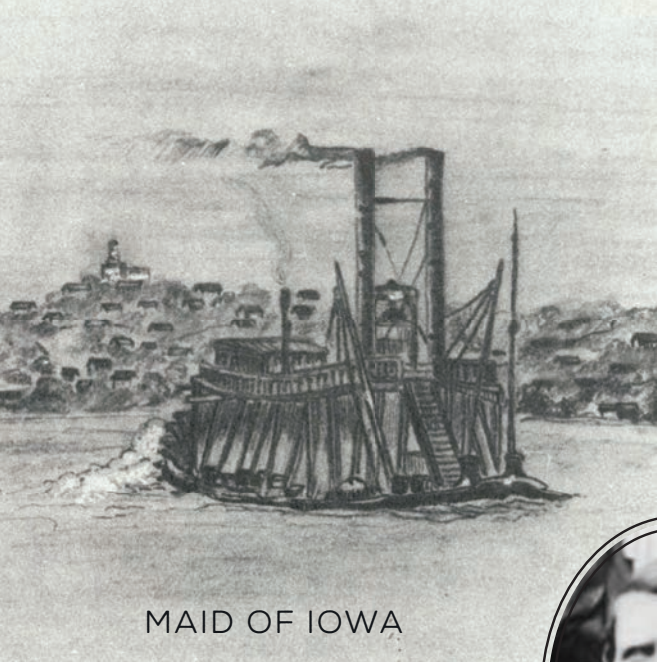
While Henshaw was trying to nurture the young Merthyr Tydfil branch and fend off religious persecution, Jones was getting acquainted with his newly adopted religion as he captained his 300-passenger steamboat, the *Maid of*

Iowa, up and down the Mississippi. In June 1843, three months after his conversion, Jones used his steamboat to transport a large group of English converts from St. Louis—where they had wintered—to Nauvoo. After docking his boat at Nauvoo, Jones met Joseph Smith for the first time, and the two men immediately took a liking to one another. The Prophet also took a liking to Captain Jones's steamboat. Upon learning that Jones's partner, Levi Moffat, was extremely displeased by Jones's conversion to the Church of Jesus Christ, Joseph purchased Moffat's half-ownership of the *Maid of Iowa* and became Jones's new partner.

Shortly thereafter Jones was called to serve a mission in his native Wales, but his departure was delayed in order to fulfill various assignments from Joseph and associated with the *Maid of Iowa*. Additional groups of convert immigrants were transported upriver aboard the *Maid*, and, for acoustical reasons, Joseph sometimes used her deck to address Saints gathered on the Mississippi's riverbanks. The *Maid* was also used to transport building materials for the Nauvoo Temple.

Just days before his martyrdom, Joseph told Dan, "I have a check in the house for \$1200. As soon as I can get it cashed you shall have \$1100 of it, and then start for Wales, not with your fingers in your mouth but prepared to buy a press and do business aright."⁴ But with the anxiety and





MAID OF IOWA

Dan Jones



confusion surrounding the events at Carthage, Jones never received the promised support. Nevertheless, he remained philosophical as he eventually sold his steamboat to finance his mission: “Thrilled with prospects of my mission I left all, rejoicing in the exchange of a steamboat for an Eldership on the deck of the never-sinking ship of life.”⁵

Only hours before Joseph and Hyrum were killed, Dan Jones was with the Prophet Joseph at Carthage Jail. The night before the martyrdom, Joseph and Dan were lying side by side in the narrow upper room of the jail. As the other men in the room apparently slept, Joseph asked Dan in a whisper if he was afraid to die. Dan responded, “Has that time come, think you? Engaged in such a cause I do not think that death would have many terrors.” Joseph then whispered back, “You will yet see Wales and fulfill the mission appointed you ere you die.”⁶

During the following forty-eight hours, Dan Jones was delivered from the hands of enemies three times. And two months later, Dan Jones and his wife Jane were on their way to Wales, traveling in company with Wilford Woodruff and Hiram Clark and their wives. The party arrived in Liverpool in early January 1845. Elder Jones was first assigned to Wrexham in North Wales, a region he knew well, given that he had spent his childhood just a few miles away.

Unable to purchase the press that Joseph Smith had wanted him to have, Jones hired the press of William Bayley in Wrexham to print his first pamphlet, a forty-eight-

page work in Welsh entitled *Y farw wedi ei chyfodi yn fyw: neu'r hen grefydd newydd* (*The Dead Raised to Life; or, the Old Religion Anew*).

The date of the preface of Jones's pamphlet, April 4, 1845, coincides with the date of the first meeting of Jones and Henshaw—the date of a conference in Manchester. Henshaw, who still spoke no Welsh, reported the opening of five new branches in the Merthyr Tydfil Conference during the previous year and a total of 195 convert baptisms, or about sixteen per month. Jones, fluent in both Welsh and English, had neither baptisms nor branches to report, but he addressed the conference with such eloquence that, after taking down a few lines, the clerk wrote: “We would here remark that we are utterly incapable of doing anything like justice to the address of Captain Jones, for though delivered while struggling with disease, such was its effect upon ourselves, and we also believe upon others, that we ceased to write, in order to give way to the effect produced upon our feelings.”⁷

Over the next eight months, and under Henshaw's leadership, there were an average of twenty convert baptisms per month in South Wales. Meanwhile, Jones's efforts in North Wales, despite his gift for oratory in both Welsh and English and the circulation of his pamphlet, brought only three new members into the fold. His lack of success among his countrymen must certainly have cost him considerable reflection. Having traveled from Nauvoo with Wilford Woodruff, he was no doubt aware of Woodruff's phenomenal success in Herefordshire some four years earlier. That he had anticipated a similar experience himself is evident in a letter he wrote to Woodruff after about seven weeks in North Wales: “I have neglected writing until now, expecting to have better news to give you, because I had some forebodings of glorious consequences.”⁸ Jones's “glorious consequences” would come, but not until he had spent nearly a year of frustration in North Wales.

In December 1845 another conference of the Church was held at Manchester, and Wilford Woodruff proposed to the assembled leadership that Jones be appointed to preside over the branches in Wales, all of which had been established under Henshaw's leadership. This proposal received unanimous approval; Henshaw was to continue as president of the Merthyr Tydfil Conference.

When Dan Jones became the president of the Church in Wales (the title used at that time for mission president)

there were approximately 500 Welsh members, most of them in the Merthyr Tydfil area. After assuming his new calling, Jones made it a priority to defend the members and their faith against the opposition from the local Protestant clergy. Jones spoke eloquently in defense of his faith and made use of a “Latter-day Saints press”—courtesy of his brother John, a Congregationalist minister in nearby Rhydybont—to ensure that the Church was portrayed accurately to the reading public.

One of his first acts was to publish a rebuttal to a thirty-two-page pamphlet published by David Williams, a lay preacher who employed bitter invective to undermine Jones’s pamphlet, *The Dead Raised to Life*. Williams’s inflammatory title, *Twyll y Seintiau Diwed-daf yn cael ei ddynoethi* (*The Fraud of the Latter Saints [sic] Exposed*), was mild compared to the accusations he made in his text. At one point, for example, Williams asserted that the *Annerchiad y Deuddeg Apostol*, Jones’ Welsh translation of the pamphlet *Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles*, was “so presumptuous as if it had been written by the fingers of the devil, who had dipped his pen in the venom of dragons or in the fiery furnace itself, and had it printed in the gates of hell.”⁹ It is difficult to think of Rhydybont, the picturesque little village where *Annerchiad* had been printed—on the Rev. John Jones’s press—as “the gates of hell.”

Dan Jones’s reaction to Williams’s vitriol was simply to put his own pen to paper and print a rebuttal.¹⁰ Many attacks against the Church appeared in the periodicals of sponsoring religious bodies. Initially Dan Jones responded to such attacks by sending letters of rebuttal to the editors, but his letters were refused publication. Jones determined to publish a Latter-day Saint periodical, *Prophwyd y Jubili* (*Prophet of the Jubilee*), again using his brother’s press. In the first issue (July 1846) Jones declared to his compatriots:

You know how we have been accused of every evil, fraud, yes, and of every foolishness. To the periodicals which have accused us we have sent in the kindest manner convincing letters in defense of our innocence. But have they been printed? No! Have we been accused in the Amserau [Times], Seren Gomer [Star of Gomer], Dysgedydd [Instructor], Bedyddiwr

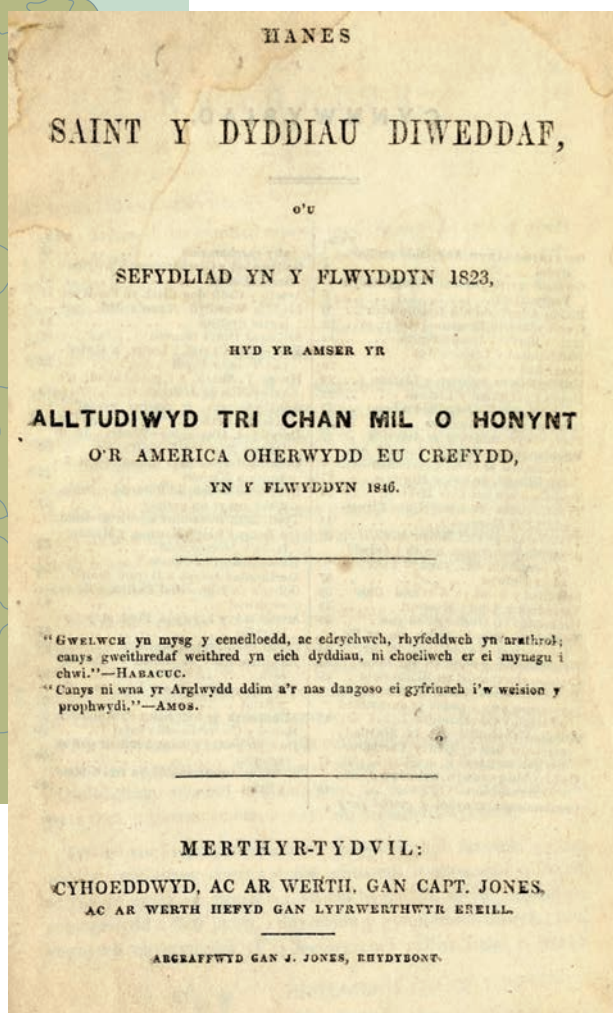


[Baptist], etc.? Yes, indeed. . . . Can everyone else raise up his magazine except us? Is the press closed to us? Is that the freedom of Wales in the 19th century? Have the periodicals been locked up? We shall open our own periodical, then. Has the press been defiled by slandering us? We shall cleanse it through defending ourselves, then.¹¹

Prophet of the Jubilee appeared regularly for the next thirty months, all but the last two issues being printed on John Jones’s “prostitute press.”¹² Much yet untold history of the Welsh Saints is nestled in the nearly 600 pages of this remarkable defender of the faith—hidden behind the formidable barrier of the Welsh language, today spoken by only twenty percent of Wales’s three million inhabitants.

Evidence of the power of the press is the conversion of William Howells, a merchant and Baptist lay minister living in Aberdare, about seven miles from Merthyr Tydfil. Howells had often heard the Reverend Davies and other ministers pounding their pulpits and shouting about the “great fraud, devilish hypocrisy, and miserable darkness of the Latter-day Satanists.”¹³ He had also read the pamphlets of such ministers but had decided to suspend judgment until he could obtain better information than the invective of Davies.

Howells’s grandson later wrote that, since Howells was too bashful and proud to go to any Latter-day Saint



meetings or speak with the missionaries, his first positive contact with the Church came when a widow who was supported by the poor fund of his parish presented him with a pamphlet written by Elder Dan Jones.¹⁴ The pamphlet was Jones's reply to the opposition of yet another Baptist minister, Edward Roberts of Rhymni, who had thunderously promised to "kill Mormonism in Rhymni on Christmas Day and bury it the next."¹⁵ Howells later described the impact that Jones's pamphlet had on him: "In a few hours [it] proved the religion I professed to be no other than a sandy foundation—all my false hopes fled, all human traditions that I had cleaved to appeared folly. I was convinced that the Saints were the only true church of God."¹⁶

Jones was exultant as he wrote to President Orson Spencer about Howells: "He came four miles purposely to be baptized, though he had never heard a sermon, only [read] my publications, especially my last reply. . . . [It] finished him entirely, and he came in as good a spirit as anyone that I ever saw, and has just returned on his way rejoicing."¹⁷ And William Howells himself declared: "The

first few hours I spent after having been baptized for the remission of my sins, by a servant who knew that he was sent by God to administer the ordinance, gave me more pleasure and knowledge of spiritual things, than during the twenty years with the Baptist connection."¹⁸

Before his conversion, Howells had served a short mission to France as a Baptist lay minister, and Latter-day Saint leaders in Liverpool soon called him to go back to France, this time as a missionary of the restored gospel. During the eighteen months before he began his mission on the Continent, he managed to baptize nearly one hundred of his Welsh compatriots. And when he stepped onto French soil on July 9, 1849, he also stepped into Latter-day Saint history as the first missionary in France to represent the Church of Jesus Christ.

During 1846, Dan Jones's first year as de facto mission president in Wales, Church membership there increased by about 500 converts. In 1847 the number of new converts neared 1,000, and during 1848 more than 1,700 received baptism. At the end of 1848 Dan Jones was released from his position, and William Phillips, a convert during the Henshaw presidency, succeeded Jones as president. Another convert from that same time period, Abel Evans, was set apart as Phillips's first counselor, while John S. Davis, whose testimony was initiated by his setting type for some of Dan Jones's pamphlets, became Phillips's second counselor and was assigned to oversee Church publications in Welsh. During his five years of service (1849–53) Davis published six volumes of *Udgoron Seion* (*Zion's Trumpet*), the name given to *Prophwyd y Jubili* (*Prophet of the Jubilee*) as Church leadership in Wales changed.

Welsh nonconformists were disturbed by claims of the Welsh Saints that miracles were being performed through priesthood power and that theirs was the only true church of God. Because nonconformists believed such claims to be blasphemous, they felt obliged to oppose and denounce "the Mormons." In July 1846 Dan Jones recorded the experience of a young man who had an injured leg from which twenty pieces of bone had been removed. During the six months before he met the missionaries, the young man had been unable to walk without a crutch: infection had apparently set in, and his leg was not healing. Jones later reported:

When he believed the gospel, I told him he would be healed if he would obey: he walked

*about a mile with crutches. By the river side we prayed that he might be enabled to dispense with his crutch, and he walked into the water [to be baptized] without it—out again, and home—and so far as I have heard has never used it since. I carried his crutch home through the town on my back, the man telling them that he was healed, but strange to say they would neither believe him nor their own eyes, but cried out impostors, etc., and that he might have walked before!! Although they knew better: but however, the man got a blessing, and when I left, the wounds in his leg were closing finely, and free from pain.*¹⁹

The first large group of emigrants from among the converts to the Church in Wales gathered in Liverpool, England, in late February 1849 with Dan Jones as their leader. Of this first group, 249 became passengers aboard the *Buena Vista* and departed for the southern US on February 26; the other 82 remained in Liverpool for about a week before departing on the *Hartley* with some English converts. As the *Buena Vista* passed Cuba on its way to New Orleans, its passengers had a good laugh about a prophecy printed in *Seren Gomer* [*Star of Gomer*] shortly before their departure: “After receiving enough money to get a ship or ships to voyage to California, [the Mormons’] Chief-President [Dan Jones] will sail them to Cuba, or some place like it, and will sell them as slaves, every jack one of them. It would serve them right for having such little respect for the book of Christ and giving it up for the books of Mormon.”²⁰

Shortly after the group landed in New Orleans they boarded the *Constitution*, a steamer that would take them up the Mississippi River to St. Louis. When they docked at St. Louis, all gave thanks for having escaped the cholera epidemic that was raging up and down the shores of the Mississippi. But their voyage from St. Louis to Council Bluffs aboard the *Highland Mary* was not so fortunate: cholera invaded the boat, and more than fifty of the Saints died. Those who had crossed on the *Hartley* also faced the cholera

epidemic after arriving in St. Louis; seventeen died. Grief and mourning engulfed the survivors as they gathered at Council Bluffs, and only eighty-two of these were able to continue to the Salt Lake Valley that same year. Dan Jones worried that the great loss of life from among this first group of Welsh converts would discourage others back in Wales from emigrating. His fears were unfounded, however, and over five thousand more of the Welsh Saints eventually left their native land and made their way to Zion.



APRIL 1849:

JOHN PARRY,

a Welsh convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was asked by Brigham Young to form a choir to sing primarily at general conferences. From 1849 to 1854 Parry served as the first director of this “con-

ference choir” that would evolve into The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square.



OCTOBER, 1890: EVAN STEPHENS,

a native of Wales, became the director of the Tabernacle Choir and served for 26 years. He is the composer of nineteen hymns in the current hymnal, as well as of the “Hosannah Anthem” sung for the 1893 Salt Lake Temple dedication and still sung at temple dedications today.

Read more about the history of the Tabernacle Choir, Pioneer, 2017, Vol. 64, #2.



The Welsh people were known throughout Great Britain and the world as natural singers. Among the Welsh immigrants to Utah in 1849 were many with well-trained voices including John Parry Sr. of Newmarket in Flintshire County. He and his wife, Mary, were among the most prominent early converts in Wales. Unfortunately, Mary died in Council Bluffs before she could make her way to Utah, but John continued to the Salt Lake Valley. Only months after his arrival in Utah, he led a choir of eighty-five Welsh singers at General Conference. Following their impressive performance, Brigham Young asked Parry to organize a choir to sing at future General Conference sessions. John Parry's new choir would eventually become the Tabernacle Choir, now known as The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, and Parry is acknowledged as the Choir's first conductor, serving until 1854. The early Welsh pioneers and their descendants have continued to make important contributions to the music of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

During the five years of William Phillips's presidency the Welsh membership peaked at 5,244 in December 1851. Although there were about eighty-eight convert baptisms per month during this period, the branches in Wales, as in other parts of Britain, were very much affected by the large numbers of Saints who continued to emigrate to America. When Phillips was released at the end of 1853 he was replaced by Dan Jones who was back in Wales on his second mission. Proselytizing and the publication of periodicals and pamphlets by the Saints played a major role in the growth of the Church in Wales during the 1850s. And emigration continued to be a major part of the gospel message to new converts.

The Welsh pioneers who crossed the plains to Utah were important contributors to the founding and settling of many Utah and Idaho communities. These pioneers were energetic, hard-working, and well-suited for the agrarian economy that Brigham Young first envisioned for Utah. The Welsh settled in Utah County, Iron County, Sanpete County, Salt Lake County, and many other Utah locales, and in Oneida County, Idaho, where a Welsh music festival is still held in the city of Malad.

The last great emigration of Welsh Saints was in April 1856: 560 traveled together on the *Samuel Curling* with Dan Jones, newly released from his second mission in Wales. After this point, numbers of convert baptisms dwindled, although the publication of *Udgor Seion* continued for another six years. In April 1862 its last editor, William Ajax,

was forced to cease publication for personal health reasons. No one took his place. The demise of *Udgor Seion* is somewhat symbolic of the decline of Church missionary activity in Wales during the nineteenth century. Although missionaries would continue to be assigned to Wales, they would not re-experience the success and excitement of the 1840s and 1850s.

From the mid-1860s until the middle of the twentieth century, comparatively few Welsh converts would come into the Church. Yet, because of the extraordinary success of the Church's early proselytizing efforts in Wales, there are today hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints who can point with pride to a Jones, Thomas, Davis, or Williams line on their pedigree charts and thank the Lord for the courage of their ancestors who accepted the restored gospel somewhere in the hills of Wales. ▣

1 Reported in *Millennial Star* 1:168.

2 *Millennial Star* 1:192.

3 Having given way to Nonconformity—to the Baptists, Methodists, and Congregationalists—Anglicanism was then in decline in Wales.

4 Dan Jones, letter to Thomas Bullock, 20 Jan 1855, 23.

5 Dan Jones, letter to Thomas Bullock, 24.

6 Dan Jones, letter to Thomas Bullock, 10; Ronald D. Dennis, "The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and His Brother Hyrum by Dan Jones," *BYU Studies* 24.1 (Winter 1984): 78-109.

7 Quoted in *Millennial Star* 5:170; the disease referenced was probably Jones's chronic lung ailment.

8 Dan Jones, letter to Wilford Woodruff, 24 Feb 1845.

9 David Williams, *Twyll y Seintiau Diweddaf yn cael ei ddynoethi* (1846), 29.

10 It had this lengthy title: *The scales, in which are seen David weighing Williams, and Williams weighing David: or David Williams, from Abercanaid, contradicting himself, caught in his deceit, and proved deistic.*

11 Dan Jones, editorial, *Prophwyd* 1.1 (Jul 1846): ii.

12 *Seren Gomer* (Dec 1847): 375.

13 *Udgor Seion* 1.1: 93.

14 William Howells, [Title], ed. ----- Howells (pub date), 3.

15 Quoted in *Prophwyd y Jubili* (March 1848): 40.

16 Quoted in *Millennial Star* 10:175.

17 Quoted in *Millennial Star* 9:364.

18 Quoted in *Millennial Star* 10:175.

19 Quoted in *Millennial Star* 8:40.

20 Quoted in *Seren Gomer* (Oct 1848): 305.

HOW

Scottish Converts

IMPACTED UTAH TERRITORY



BY REED M. IZATT

*Charles E. Maw Professor of Chemistry, Emeritus,
Brigham Young University*

After centuries of conflict, the kingdoms of Scotland and England were politically combined in 1707 as the United Kingdom of Great Britain (UK). This was a propitious alliance for both nations, coming as it did on the eve of enormous cultural and economic changes in the United Kingdom and the world. During the next one hundred fifty years, the Enlightenment and the ensuing Romantic Era would shape western culture and governments, the Industrial Revolution would utterly transform manufacturing and production, and the vital modernist field of economics would be established.

Many Scots played central roles in these historical dramas, including Adam Smith, the father of economics; David Hume, the noted empiricist philosopher; James Watt, inventor of the steam engine; Robert Burns, the tenant farmer who pioneered





Romantic poetry; James Clerk Maxwell, the researcher in electricity and kinetics who laid the foundations of quantum physics; Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson, world-renowned nineteenth-century novelists; and Elsie Inglis, pioneering gynecologist and founder of the Scottish Women's Hospitals. First-generation American immigrants Alexander Graham Bell and Andrew Carnegie were born and reared in Scotland. Some historians have argued that Scottish contributions to these events and the development of new technologies were disproportionately significant.¹

As was the case elsewhere in the West, however, Scotland's nineteenth-century economic rise came at the expense of its working classes. Central Scotland's rich coal deposits supplied energy to the UK's burgeoning industrial enterprises, but miners endured crowded, unsafe, and unhealthy living conditions above ground and dangerous working conditions below. Tens of thousands of tenant farmers and their families were displaced to urban manufacturing centers as landowners (known as *lairds* in Scotland) transformed their huge holdings into grazing pastures for sheep to produce wool for the burgeoning textile mills around Glasgow. Air, water, and ground pollution were essentially uncontrolled in Scotland's cities. While life expectancy in urban centers like Glasgow was low throughout the eighteenth century, it fell by five years during the opening decade of the nineteenth—to 37 years for men and

40 for women. Killer diseases tied to unsanitary environments, such as typhus, cholera, diphtheria, and influenza, were rampant.²

These facts are important to understanding early missionary work in Scotland by representatives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and to appreciating the character of early Scottish converts to the Church. They were intelligent people representative of their time and place, people hungry for truth and opportunity, people who asked hard questions. Missionary work for the Church began in Scotland when two newly baptized Canadian members, Alexander Wright and Samuel Mullinger, arrived in Glasgow on December 29, 1839, with authorization to preach the gospel there. Wright and Mullinger were Scots by birth and had returned to their homeland to teach family and friends about the restored Church of Jesus Christ. Their teachings resonated with many Scots who were convinced that existing churches had gone astray of Christ's original doctrine.³

Elder Orson Pratt, representing the Quorum of the Twelve, arrived in Scotland a few months after the Canadian missionaries and preached his first public sermon on May 24, 1840. Shortly, he organized a branch of the Church in Paisley—about twelve miles west of Glasgow—and then traveled with Mullinger to Edinburgh, the home of Mullinger's parents. Orson resided in Edinburgh for a time

where he wrote *An Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions* (1841), an important early pamphlet about the origins of the Church: it contained one of the earliest published accounts of the First Vision, summaries of appearances of the angel Moroni to the Prophet Joseph, and a brief history of Joseph's reception and translation of the Book of Mormon plates.⁴ By the time Pratt left Edinburgh in late March 1841 he had taught and baptized more than 200 of its residents. He assigned George D. Watt, an English convert of Scottish parentage, responsibility for directing missionary work in Scotland.

The message of hope and love projected in Pratt's *An Interesting Account* resonated with working-class Scots accustomed to poverty, short lifespans, and hopelessness. Spiritual promises associated with restored priesthood authority and gospel principles were made even sweeter by invitations to accept a new life in Zion. Brigham Young needed skilled workmen to carry out the vast colonizing work he envisioned. On December 23, 1847, "A General Epistle to all Saints in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales and adjacent islands and countries" invited members of its audience "to emigrate as speedily as possible," to "come immediately and prepare to go West—bringing with you all kinds of choice seeds, of grain, vegetables, fruit, shrubbery, trees," together with "the best tools of every description" and every other "implement and article ... that shall tend to promote the comfort, health, happiness and prosperity of any people."⁵ Converts in Scotland welcomed the opportunity to gather to Zion, and there were apparently few regrets about leaving mines and mills behind.

The Scottish emigrants were predominantly skilled workers, the very people Brigham Young needed. Listed in the Liverpool Emigration Records for the years 1850 to 1870 are 588 Scottish males, many of whom were members of the Church. Just under 41% of these identified mining as their primary occupation; nearly 12% were weavers or did other work in the textile industry; about 7% were metal workers, including blacksmiths; and about 5% were tanners and leathercrafters. Most of the remaining 35% were carpenters, stonemasons, gardeners, farmers, bakers, rope makers, tool or implement makers, or general laborers. Just 2% had professional training as surgeons, dentists, druggists, or schoolteachers.⁶

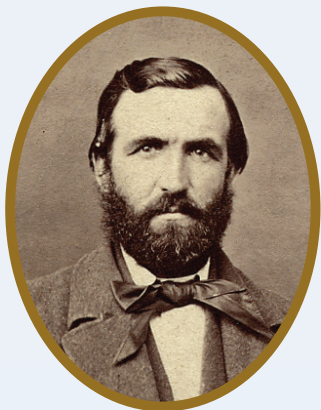
There are many narratives demonstrating the faith of early Scottish converts and their generous contributions in establishing Utah and the American West. David McKay, an 1855 convert from Thurso, Scotland, was the father of David O. McKay, ninth President of the Church. John Hunter joined the Church in 1852 in Paisley, Scotland, and immigrated to Utah a decade later with his family. He is the great-grandfather of Howard W. Hunter, fourteenth President of the Church. Richard Ballantyne, born and raised in Whitridgebog, immigrated to Nauvoo in 1843 and then to Salt Lake City in 1848. In 1849, having received permission from his bishop to do so, he conducted the first Latter-day Saint Sunday School for youth; Sunday School became an official auxiliary organization of the Church in 1867. Descendants of Thomas McNeil and his cousin Charles McNeil, coal miners from Tranent near Edinburgh, include Quorum of the Twelve members Melvin J. Ballard and M. Russell Ballard and the first president of Zions First National Bank, Orval W. Adams.

Following are brief accounts of other early Scottish converts who quietly—or dramatically—impacted the nineteenth-century Church of Jesus Christ.



WILLIAM BUDGE

was born in Lanark, a small town near Glasgow, in 1828. However, because his father was a salesman and moved from town to town, William was familiar with a number of villages in the Scottish Lowlands. In 1844, William first heard the word “Mormon” in connection with the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Four years later, out of curiosity, he attended a religious service of the Church in Glasgow. Following his conversion he was baptized in the icy waters of the River Clyde in December 1848. Called to labor in the British Mission in 1851, Elder Budge was, in 1854, transferred for a short time to the Swiss and Italian Mission. There, he gained a rudimentary understanding of the German language. Following his return to England, Budge was requested by European Mission President Franklin D. Richards to travel to Dresden,



Germany, and to answer an inquiry from an investigator named Karl G. Maeser.⁷

Despite his meager knowledge of the German language, Elder Budge had a firm testimony of the restored gospel and a genuinely humble, warm, and friendly disposition. These attributes made him an ideal missionary for Maeser, who later wrote, “It was providential that such a man was the first Mormon I ever beheld, for, although scarcely able to make himself understood in German, he, by his winning and yet dignified personality, created an impression upon me and my family which was the keynote to an indispensable influence which hallowed the principles he advocated.”⁸ Following their conversion and baptisms in October 1855, the Karl Maeser family immigrated to England and then, in 1860, to Utah. As a trained and skilled educator and as a man of unshakeable integrity and faith, Karl Maeser had gifts that were indispensable in frontier Utah. His students became teachers and professors, civic leaders, business leaders, local and national politicians, university presidents, judges, and General Authorities of the Church. Maeser was the architect of Brigham Young University and of the larger Church Educational System.⁹



River Clyde

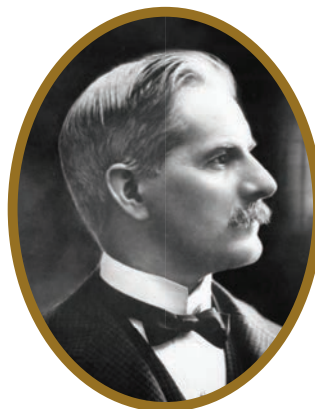
William Budge eventually immigrated to Utah with his wife and a group of Saints who left Liverpool in May 1860 and arrived in Salt Lake Valley early that October. Budge and his descendants helped found and govern the Cache Valley and Bear Lake regions. Budge himself served as bishop of the Providence Ward; president of the Bear Lake Stake during construction of the tabernacle in Paris, Idaho; president of the European Mission; and president of the Logan Temple.¹⁰

JANE ANGUS is representative of young single women in mid-nineteenth-century Scotland who acquired testimonies of the restored gospel, joined the Church, and aspired to gather to Zion with the rest of the Saints. Many young single women lacked the money to immigrate to the US; many also lacked the support of family and friends. Often such women married outside the Church and remained in Scotland. But Jane Angus had a different experience.¹¹

Jane grew up in Rutherglen, a small coal mining town on the outskirts of Glasgow. Her father, John Angus, died following a coal mine explosion in May 1858 in Rutherglen. His clothes ignited in the explosion, and although friends extinguished the flames after he exited the mine as a “fiery torch,” he died an excruciating death nine days later. Jane’s mother, Mary, had endured the death of a seventeen-year-old daughter in 1857, then the tragic loss of her husband, and finally the deaths of three other children in 1859 and 1866. In 1868, when Jane first learned of the Church of Jesus Christ, she was the second of three surviving daughters. Her mother and her two sisters were adamantly opposed to her joining the Church. Nevertheless, she was baptized and began making preparations to emigrate. When Mary received word that Jane would be leaving for the US on a ship out of Glasgow on a certain evening in early 1869, she enlisted a policeman to help her search several ships scheduled for departure that evening. The search was unsuccessful, and Jane departed as planned. In later years, Jane corresponded faithfully with her mother and sisters, and positive family relationships were restored.¹²

While still in Scotland, Jane had grown close to a missionary couple from Providence, Utah, and determined she would settle there. Not long after her arrival, she married a widower in Logan, Alexander S. Izatt, a native of Scotland like herself. He had two small children, and he and Jane became parents of eight additional children. Following Alexander’s untimely death in 1890, Jane became a skilled nurse and worked as a physician’s assistant for many years. She returned to Scotland for a visit in 1913 and was reunited with her sister, Mary.¹³

DAVID ECCLES was born in Glasgow in 1849 to a nearly-blind wood-turner, William Eccles, and his Irish wife, Sarah Hutchinson. Impoverished slum dwellers, the Eccles family had almost no resources except their love for each other, their ambition, and their willingness to work. They also had the gospel of Jesus Christ: William had been taught and baptized by Latter-day Saint missionaries in 1842 and had subsequently baptized Sarah. They dreamed of the day when they would be able to immigrate to Zion.¹⁴



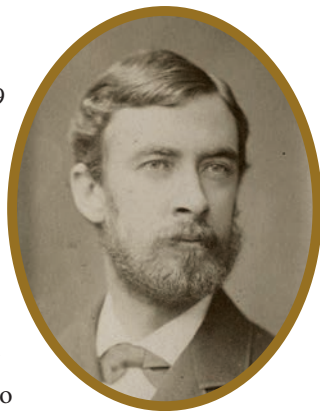
A recent issue of *Pioneer* related how, as a child on the streets of Glasgow, David Eccles had become adept at peddling resin sticks made by his father, and how, in 1863, the family secured a loan through the Perpetual Immigration Fund enabling them to make the journey to Utah. They arrived with nothing but themselves and their hopes, but that was enough.¹⁵

The remarkable rise of David Eccles from a poverty-stricken Scottish immigrant boy to a pioneering western industrialist is captivatingly told by Leonard Arrington.¹⁶ Enterprises that Eccles nurtured in the American West included lumber companies, railroads, sugar beet refineries and other food processing establishments, construction companies, insurance companies, and banks. His son, Marriner Stoddard Eccles, became a noted US banker and economist and served as chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board. The contributions of the Eccles family to Utah are legendary.

CHARLES W. NIBLEY

was born in 1849 in Hunterfield, Midlothian, Scotland, to James Nibley and Jean Wilson, both of whom were coal miners. Jean spent her childhood in the mines carrying coal—in a large basket on her back—from the mining face to the collection point. She learned to work before she learned to play, and she was determined to make a better life for her children. Yet, oatmeal porridge with a little sour milk was their main source of nourishment. On Sundays they would occasionally get a little meat.¹⁷

In the spring of 1844, Jean heard the message of the restored gospel preached by missionaries of the Church. She said later that she “drank it all in as though it were living water which was springing up unto everlasting life.” James was noted as being stubborn, but each evening after supper Jean read to him from the tracts she had received from the Elders. And one evening, she was surprised and pleased when she asked him what he thought about the message, and he responded, “Aye, but it is true.” The following Saturday, both were baptized.¹⁸



The Nibley family emigrated from Scotland in the spring of 1855 and worked for five years at a woolen mill in Rhode Island, saving every penny possible. In 1860 they traveled by train to Florence, Nebraska, where they joined a wagon train bound for Salt Lake City. Following their arrival in Utah, they settled in Wellsville in Cache County where there were many other Scots. Charles attended schools in Wellsville, and then, as a young adult, tested his capacities in a variety of enterprises—railroads, sugar processing, lumber. He eventually gave his attention—along with David Eccles and John Kerr Stoddard—to lumber production in eastern Oregon.¹⁹ A lifelong devoted member of the Church, Charles served as a missionary in the British Isles and as second counselor to Heber J. Grant in the First Presidency.

JOHN STODDARD

and his wife, Janet Kerr, managed to support ten children on the few pence per day that family members received toiling together in the coal mines of East Lothian, near Edinburgh. Death tolls from accidents and disease were high. Mines opened, prospered for a period, then closed. Moving about as work conditions changed brought the Stoddard family into contact with the Nibley family. When the Stoddards joined the Church in 1844, their prospects brightened considerably. They made lasting friends, among them the Nibleys. They had a new faith in prayer, the scriptures, and God’s love. And in late 1848, the family sailed from Liverpool bound for the US. Perhaps as a symbol of their new life, they changed the spelling of their surname from *Stoddart* to *Stoddard*.²⁰



In October 1851, when the family arrived in Salt Lake City, Brigham Young was quick to learn of their coal mining experience and expertise. He called them to journey to Cedar City to serve in the Iron Mission where they would help develop the coal and iron deposits recently discovered in Iron County. They accepted the call, and despite many hardships they and their neighbors faced, the first iron manufactured west of the Mississippi was produced on

September 30, 1852. For a variety of reasons, the Iron Mission was closed within a few years, and the senior John Stoddard died at Cedar City in the spring of 1854.²¹

Young John Kerr Stoddard married Esther Emily Kershaw, and they moved to Wellsville, Utah in 1859. During the 1880s John established a close relationship with David Eccles that would influence him for the remainder of his life. Their similar Scottish backgrounds and parallel lumbering interests brought the two men together.²² They, together with Charles Nibley and two of John's sons, were pioneers of lumber production in eastern Oregon, harvesting abundant timber resources located there.

Beginning in 1840, many Scots were enabled to make significant life changes—not possible previously—as they embraced the restored gospel, discovered genuine reasons to hope and to change, served one another, and sacrificed to follow President Young's counsel to immigrate to Zion. Latter-day Saint missionaries taught revealed truths that made sense to the converts. In turn, Scottish converts enthusiastically embraced the call to emigrate to the American Zion and committed themselves to establish and build colonies through their desperately needed “working-class skills.” Collectively, the Scottish Saints were men and women of character and devotion. They possessed wide-ranging abilities and talents and were intensely loyal to family and friends, to the Kingdom, and to God. They helped establish enduring economic and cultural enterprises in Utah and throughout the West; they provided crucial political and civic leadership; and they became pillars of the Church. Their heritage is enduring and extensive, and many contemporary Latter-day Saints revere the wonderful Scots in their respective family lines. ▣

1 The information here is gleaned in part from A. Arthur Hermann, *How the Scots Invented the Modern World* (2001), 320–44.

2 T. Christopher Smout, *A History of the Scottish People, 1560–1830* (1969), 403–12; Frederick S. Buchanan, “The Ebb and Flow of Mormonism in Scotland, 1840–1900,” *BYU Studies*, 27.2 (1987): 27–52.

3 Buchanan 29.

4 David J. Whittaker, “Orson Pratt’s [An] Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions: A Seminal Scottish Imprint in Early Mormon History,” *Mormon Historical Studies*, 5 (Fall 2004): 79–100; see 82–89.

5 Quoted in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Migration 1856–1860* (1960), 21–2.

6 Buchanan 39.

7 Preston Nibley, “William Budge—Dedicated Faith in Jesus Christ,” *Stalwarts of Mormonism* (1954), 10–4.

8 Nibley 10–4; A. LeGrand Richards, “Moritz Busch’s *Die Mormonen* and the Conversion of Karl G. Maeser,” *BYU Studies*, 45.4 (2006): 45–67.

9 Richards 64.

10 Nibley 10–4.

11 “Jane Angus Izatt” in *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, vol. 2 (1998), 1492.

12 Reed M. Izatt, “My Family History: My Eight Great-Grandparents,” ms. (2012), online.

13 “Jane Angus Izatt” 1492.

14 Smout 412; Leonard J. Arrington, *David Eccles: Pioneer Western Industrialist* (1975), 1–26.

15 Arrington 24–6.

16 See Arrington, *David Eccles*.

17 Boyd J. Petersen, *Hugh Nibley: A Consecrated Life* (2002), 1–3.

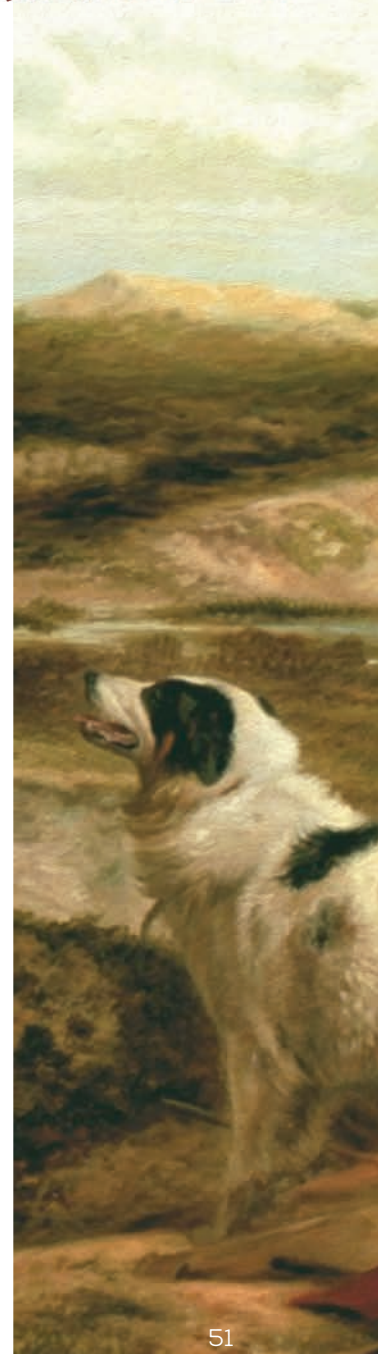
18 Ibid.

19 Arrington 84; Peterson 19; Richard D. Poll, *Howard J. Stoddard: Founder, Michigan National Bank* (1980), 9–10.

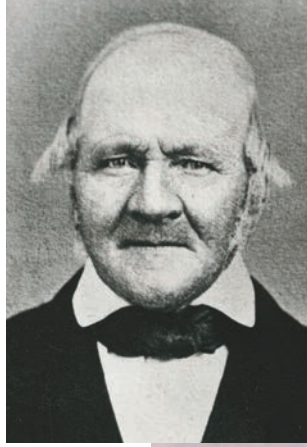
20 Poll 4–9.

21 Ibid.

22 Poll 10, 88.



JOHN BENBOW



MAN OF FAITH AND
GENEROSITY

BY JAY A. PARRY

Wilford Woodruff's astounding experience with the United Brethren in 1840 is one of best-known events in Latter-day Saint missionary history. Most of his success came at John Benbow's farm in Herefordshire, England. But who was John Benbow—and what became of him and his family?

John Benbow Before the Latter-day Saints Came

John Benbow was born in Herefordshire, England, on April 1, 1800, the tenth of eleven children. Thomas Benbow, his father, died when John was only five years old, leaving his mother, Ann Jones Benbow, to raise a very large family by herself.¹ Little is known of John's early

life, but at age eighteen he went to work for Squire Jenks, a local farmer, and was so effective that Jenks doubled his wages each of the next two years. John then moved on to work for himself, leasing a hop² farm from Squire Gardner, "and managed it so well as to make considerable money."³

When he was twenty-six, he married Jane Holmes, who was thirty-four. She had property of her own, and by combining their resources they secured a lease on about three hundred acres at a place called Hill Farm.⁴ John and Jane's children died in childbirth or infancy, but in time they took in a niece and a nephew from John's side of the family and another niece and nephew from Jane's side.⁵

John was a man with deep religious yearnings. He was actively



Benbow farm

BENBOW FARM AND POND BY FRANK MAGLEBY;
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involved in the United Brethren, a working-class religious group dissatisfied with certain teachings and practices of their former congregation, the Primitive Methodists, which had broken away from the Methodist Church to re-establish early practices of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. John Benbow was a member of a ten-person church committee that met monthly to discuss “the operations of the United Brethren.”⁶ Also, according to family records, the Benbows allowed Thomas Kington, the leader of the United Brethren preachers, to stay at their farm without charge for eight years.⁷

A Believing and Giving Soul

One month before John Benbow’s fortieth birthday, Latter-day Saint missionary Wilford Woodruff arrived unannounced at the Benbow farm, accompanied by John’s younger brother, William, who had recently been baptized.⁸ Both John and Jane were spiritually prepared to receive Elder Woodruff’s message; the evening of his arrival, they stayed up until 2am hearing his teachings, and they were baptized the very next day. Wilford Woodruff recorded the reception the Benbows gave him: “I spoke the word of God unto him & his house & he received my testimony & we had a good time.”⁹



From that day forward, Hill Farm became the center point of the Latter-day Saint missionaries’ efforts in that part of England. Elder Woodruff and others preached in the large hall John licensed for that purpose,¹⁰ and one or more of the missionaries stayed at the Benbow home on a regular basis.¹¹ Converts were baptized in the Benbows’ pond, including ten members of the Benbow family—John and Jane, John’s mother, and several of John’s siblings, nieces, and nephews—and five of Jane’s relatives.¹²

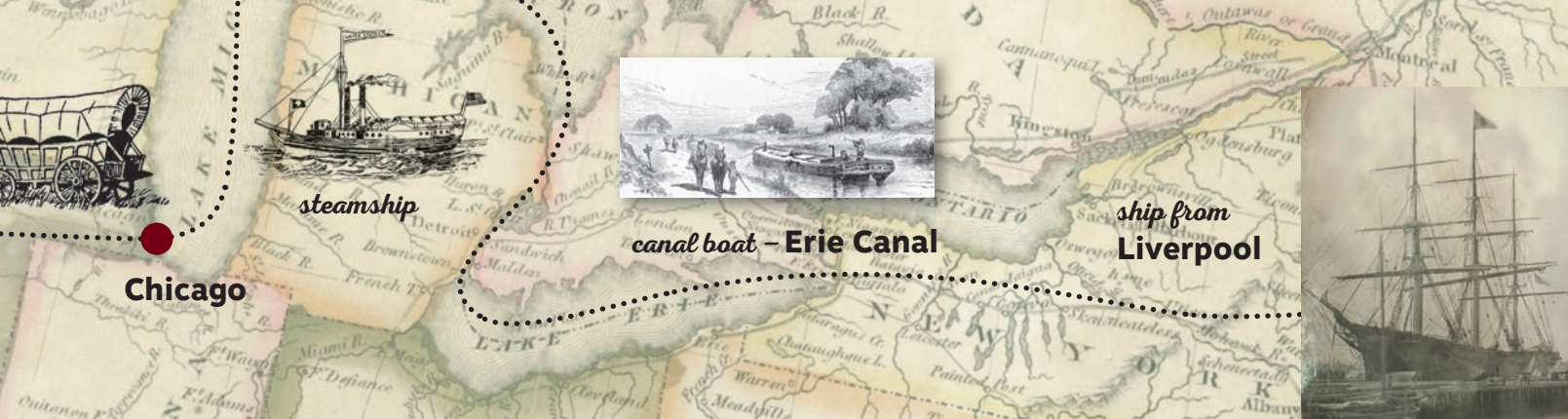
John and Jane were generous with their means, often providing room and board for the missionaries. When Brigham Young and Wilford Woodruff needed funds to publish a British edition of the Book of Mormon and the Latter-day Saint hymnbook, the Benbows donated £250, much of the total amount needed. They gave Elders Woodruff and Theodore Turley £35 to help meet their personal expenses, and then donated £100 to help as many as forty of their fellow Saints emigrate to the United States. Along with co-owner Thomas Kington, who had also been baptized, John Benbow donated the Gadfield Elm Chapel to the Church. Two years later it was sold to raise more funds for emigration.¹³

Making His Way to Zion

John Benbow was ordained an elder within weeks of his baptism. In June 1840, he was called to preside over the Saints

Numerous individuals taught at the Benbow home were baptized in a pond on the property.

PHOTO BY KENNETH MAYS



at Frooms Hill.¹⁴ That September, John and Jane joined about two hundred other Saints on the ship *North America*, departing from Liverpool, England, for the US. Their journey took them on a sailing ship across the Atlantic, then on canal boats along the Erie Canal and a steamship across the Great Lakes to Chicago. They traveled by team and wagon from Chicago to Dixon, Illinois, where they planned to continue by steamboat down the Rock River to the Mississippi River and then south to Nauvoo. The boat they had originally booked to Nauvoo was not available when they arrived at Dixon, but John Benbow paid half the purchase price of another boat so the Saints could continue their journey.¹⁵

After the Benbows and their fellow Saints finally arrived in Nauvoo, William Clayton, who had been traveling with them, recorded: “Thus ended a journey of over 5000 miles having been exactly 11 weeks and about 10 hours between leaving Liverpool and arriving at our journeys end. We had been much exposed to cold weather and suffered many deprivations and inconveniences yet through the mercy of God we landed safe and in good health with the exception of 8 persons one of whom died soon after landing. We were pleased to find ourselves once more at home and felt to praise God for his goodness.”¹⁶

The Benbows spent nearly six years in Nauvoo, where they established a farm about six miles out of town. In January 1842, Wilford Woodruff visited their farm, recording in his journal, “This was the first time I had been to his [John Benbow’s] house since my return to Nauvoo. I spent the time vary pleasantly. . . . His farm looked almost like the garden of Eden. I never had seen more work done in one year on a prairie farm than on his. He had surrounded it & crossed it with heavy ditches and planted thorn hedges. His dwelling, barns, sheds, garden yards, orchards, &c ware all beautifully arranged. It much resembled some of the farms of old England. It will be a pleasant retreat for a summers ride from Nauvoo.”¹⁷ Others who visited the Benbows’ Nauvoo farm included Joseph and Emma Smith and Hyrum

and Mary Fielding Smith, as well as Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Willard Richards, and George A. Smith, along with their families.¹⁸

On June 25, 1844, Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and thirteen others were arrested and brought to Carthage, Illinois, on charges relating to the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor’s* printing press, and the magistrate set a very high bail of \$500 each, or \$7,500 in total. To the court’s surprise, John Benbow and three others who were not among the defendants combined their resources to cover the required amount. Joseph and his companions were released that evening, but Joseph and Hyrum were rearrested in less than one hour on charges of treason and incarcerated in Carthage Jail. They were murdered two days later.¹⁹

Less than two months after the martyrdom, Wilford and Phoebe Woodruff were called to serve another mission in England. They left their four-year-old son Wilford Jr. with the Benbows, and he remained in their care for more than a year and a half.²⁰

In January 1846, John Benbow took a plural wife, Agnes Taylor, the sister of John Taylor. She was fifty-eight and he was forty-six. There is no evidence that they ever lived together, and their marriage was ended in September 1847.²¹ Later in 1846, John and Jane Benbow sold their Nauvoo property for a significant loss and traveled to Winter Quarters, camping in their wagon on property where the Woodruffs were building a log cabin. Jane was very ill when they arrived and died only a month later on November 27. Sadly, at the time of his wife’s death, John was too ill to even accompany mourners to the cemetery. The Woodruffs had their own tragedies, losing a young son on November 12 and a newborn son on December 10.²²

John made the journey from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake City in Brigham Young’s 1848 company and was assigned as a captain of fifty in the company. He arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September of that year and, according to family tradition, moved in with his foster son and nephew,

Thomas Benbow, who had settled in the South Cottonwood area.²³ To avoid crowding his young host family, John reportedly dug a cave in the side of a nearby hill and spent his nights there during his first winter in the Valley.

Final Years

In September 1851, when John was fifty-one years old, he married Rosetta Wright King Peacock, who was thirty-two. She had been married twice before and had two children, but the older child had stayed with his father when his parents separated. Her younger child, a daughter named Mary, was three years old when John and Rosetta married. John began to raise her as his own, and she later changed her surname to Benbow. John and Rosetta began the backbreaking work of homesteading 160 acres in South Cottonwood, creating yet another farm from scratch.²⁴ A daughter later recalled that “wolves and foxes were often seen” and “snakes were plentiful.”²⁵

In October 1852, Rosetta gave birth to another daughter, Isabella Markham Benbow, who was premature and weighed only 3½ pounds but survived, becoming John Benbow’s only child to reach adulthood.²⁶ John and Rosetta had four other children, but all died in infancy.²⁷ Late in life, Isabella recalled her parents’ spiritual approach to parenting:

The first lesson taught me was prompt obedience to my parents.

I was requested to kneel with them night and morning in family prayer long before I knew the meaning of this attitude or understood the sentiment developed thereby.

One day my father received a letter from England, which told him of his mother’s death. That evening in prayer, Father’s voice, broken with sorrow, attracted my attention, and I realized for the first time that Father was talking to someone who had the power to give him the things he asked for. Thus was the idea of reverence and of Deity awakened in my mind. . . .

There was no Sunday School in the ward then, so Father had us read in turn from the Bible and he would explain the passages to us. He would tell us of Jesus, how he taught and what he suffered. One day Father took the Book of Mormon and said to me, “My girl, if you will read this book carefully and relate to me what you read

about, the book shall be yours when you finish it.”

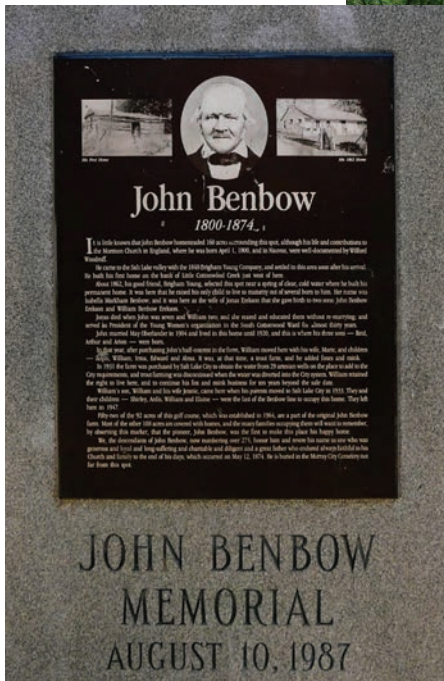
This was a pleasing proposition to me, for I wanted to know of its contents, as well as to claim the book for myself, so I set about the pleasing task.

I would read a while and then skip out and tell Father what I had read; he was never too busy or too tired to listen to my recital or to explain the parts that were not clear to my understanding.”²⁸

John continued to be remarkably generous with his means. He “sent his team and hired man six times across the plains, 1000 miles [each direction], to haul ‘Mormon’ emigrants to Utah.”²⁹ He also responded to calls to provide wagons and teams to help haul stone for construction of the Salt Lake Temple.³⁰ As part of a developing community, John was asked to help fund the construction of a schoolhouse. He did so. Then local authorities asked him to fund another, and then another. He gave as requested. But when his bishop asked him to contribute to build a fourth one, John politely but firmly declined the invitation. He explained to the bishop, Andrew Cahoon, “I haven’t moved and I’ve helped build three schools, and I don’t intend to help with a fourth.” Bishop Cahoon was offended and complained to Brigham Young. After consideration, President Young decided that Church leaders had asked too much of Brother Benbow, and he counseled the two men to shake hands and forgive each other, which they did.³¹

Through thrift and hard work, John built up a comfortable level of wealth during the first half of his life—but he didn’t hold onto that wealth to provide for his old age. Instead, because of his generosity, he placed himself in a position of working hard all his days. A great-grandson noted that he “lived in log and adobe homes from the time he entered the Salt Lake Valley until his death.”³² Nevertheless, he always had enough for his needs—and even in these “reduced circumstances,” he was ready and willing to help others.³³

After a faithful and fruitful life, John Benbow died in May 1874 and was the second person buried in the Murray City Cemetery.³⁴ He had lived to see the fulfillment of his patriarchal blessing, pronounced on his head by Hyrum Smith in 1842: “You shall be blest upon the Land, to long enjoy it, with Health & length of Days, if your Faith fail not, in your House & in your Habitations, in your incomings & outgoings, in Basket & in Store, with Fields Flocks & folds, with a Heart of Gratitude & appreciation, & philanthropy, & the power of the Holy Priesthood.” ▀



MONUMENTS

Hidden away in the rough grass to the side of one of the greens at the Murray Parkway Golf Course is a historical marker of John Benbow (6345 Murray Parkway Avenue). Fifty-two of the ninety-two acres of the golf course are part of the original John Benbow farm. John and Rosetta Benbow's original tombstones are mounted on the wall of the Murray City Cemetery office building.

- 1 Arthur B. Erekson, *A History of John Benbow* (Provo, UT: privately published, 1988), 2–3.
- 2 Hops are the flower or seed cone of the vine-like hop plant and are used as a flavor additive and preservative in beer.
- 3 Isabella Markham Benbow Erekson, quoted in Erekson 2.
- 4 Isabella Markham Benbow Erekson, quoted in Erekson 2–3.
- 5 Zelph Y. Erekson and Irma Erekson Holt, "John Benbow," unpublished manuscript, [6], LDS Church History Library (CHL); Erekson 4–5, 38, 194.
- 6 Erekson 48.
- 7 Erekson 38–9.
- 8 Erekson 11–2, 17. William had been baptized earlier. James B. Allen and Malcolm R. Thorp, "The Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840–41: Mormon Apostles and the Working Classes," *BYU Studies* 15.4 (Summer 1975): 6; Erekson 37.
- 9 Wilford Woodruff's *Journal*, 1833–40 (vol. 1), ed. Scott G. Kenney (1983), 4 Mar 1840, 423.
- 10 Erekson 48.
- 11 Elders Wilford Woodruff, Brigham Young, Willard Richards, George A. Smith, and Theodore Turley stayed with the Benbows a total of ninety days, free of charge, during the spring and summer of 1840. In addition

- to her other normal farm and household duties, Jane would have provided their meals, prepared their beds, and likely helped wash and mend their clothing (Erekson 100–1).
- 12 Wilford Woodruff, *Leaves from My Journal* (1882), 80; *Wilford Woodruff's Journal* 379–81; Erekson 33–8.
- 13 Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts (1912), 188; Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, ed. Elden Jay Watson (1968), 20 May and 8 Sep 1840, 76, 79–80; Erekson 68–70, 74, 77, 97–101.
- 14 Wilford Woodruff's *Journal*, 21 Jun 1840, 465.
- 15 Erekson 112–21.
- 16 William Clayton diary, 24 Nov 1840, 95–6, CHL; quoted in James B. Allen and Thomas G. Alexander, *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton, 1840 to 1842* (1974), 201.
- 17 Wilford Woodruff's *Journal*, 1841–45 (vol. 2), ed. Scott G. Kenney (1983), 30 Jan 1842, 152–3.
- 18 Joseph Smith Journal, 3 Jun 1842; *Journal History of the Church*, 11 Oct 1843, CHL; John Taylor Journal, 5 Aug 1845, quoted in Dean C. Jessee, "The John Taylor Nauvoo Journal: January 1845–September 1845," *BYU Studies* 23.3 (Summer 1983): 73.

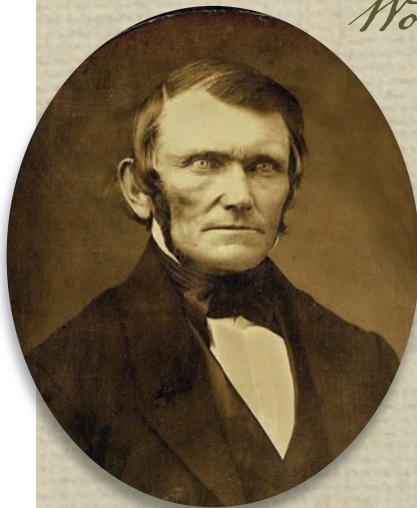
- 19 Smith 6:568–9, 617–8.
- 20 Wilford Woodruff's *Journal*, 1841–45, 18–19 Aug 1844, 448–9; Erekson 126–7.
- 21 Erekson 133, 152; Wilford Woodruff's *Journal*, 1846–50 (vol. 3), ed. Scott G. Kenney (1983), 7 Sep 1847, 268. It is unclear whether the couple divorced or had their marriage annulled.
- 22 *Journal History of the Church*, 21 Oct and 27 Nov 1846, CHL; Wilford Woodruff's *Journal*, 1846–50, 3, 12, 27, and 29 Nov and 10–11 Dec 1846, 94–7; Erekson 146–9.
- 23 *Journal History of the Church*, 31 May and 31 Dec 1848, CHL.
- 24 Erekson 163.
- 25 "Reminiscence of Isabella Markham Benbow," quoted in Erekson 167.
- 26 Isabella married John Erekson in 1869, and had three children, two of whom survived to adulthood.
- 27 Erekson 157–8, 162, 200.
- 28 Erekson 169.
- 29 Richard L. Evans, *Mormonism in Great Britain* (1937), 115.
- 30 Erekson 186.
- 31 Erekson 184.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Erekson 186.
- 34 Erekson 185.

"Out of that 1,800

which we baptized in Herefordshire in seven months, I hardly know one that has turned against this Church. There has been less apostasy out of that branch of the Church and kingdom of God than out of the same number from any part of the world that I am acquainted with.

"We are called every day or two to bury some of them. A good many of them are still living. Some of them are Bishops—bro. Clark, bro. Rowberry, and a good many of them scattered all through this Territory. Old father Kington is still living or was the last I heard of him, though near the grave. They are passing away, and when I went to see brother Pitt's body, the thought came to me, Whose turn to go next? Maybe mine, maybe yours, we cannot tell anything about it. These things should be an admonition to us to be true and faithful while we dwell here."

— *Elder Wilford Woodruff*



FROM THE
FUNERAL
SERMON FOR
WILLIAM PITT
AT THE SALT
LAKE 14TH
WARD,
23 FEBRUARY,
1873

